STRAIN

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VOL.
1
STRAIN
STORY BY BURONSON ART BY RYOICHI IKEGAMI
PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL

STRAIN 1

STRAIN VOL. 1

Life in the beck streets of Kuala Lumpur, Maleysie, is chaap. And it just got cheeper....

A human life is worth so little to professional sssassin Mayo that he will kill you for *just five dollars*. But when the "Organization" hires him to kill the mother of teenage prostitute Shion, he takes pity on them both.

For defying their orders, the leaders of the Organization pronounce a death sentence on our reluctant hero. Has Mayo bitten off more than he can chew?

STRAIN

STORY BY BURONSON, ART BY RYOICHI IKEGAMI

PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL

vol.1

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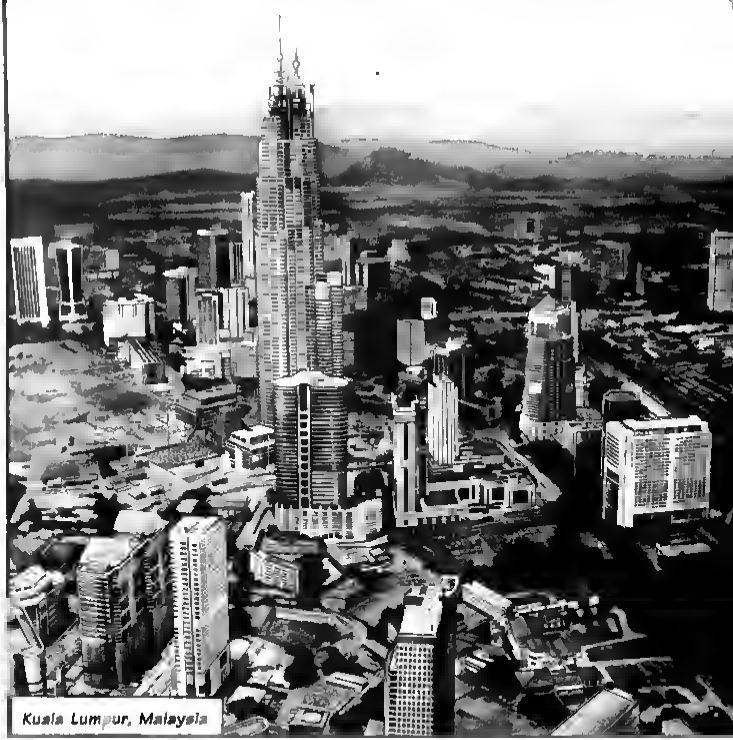
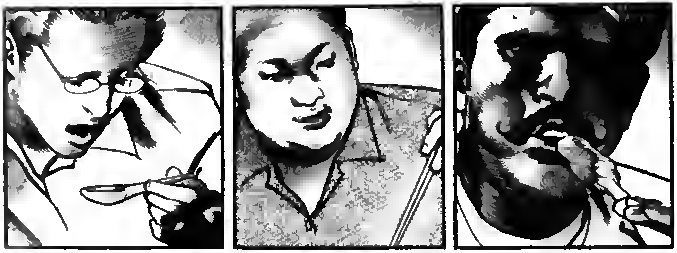


Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

CHAPTER ONE
MAYO, THE HORSE

Precipitous Economic Growth! Malaysia To Become Highly Developed Nation By 21st Century!

经济成長　一帆风順！
21世紀初期
馬来西亜的目標是成為先进国家的一員！



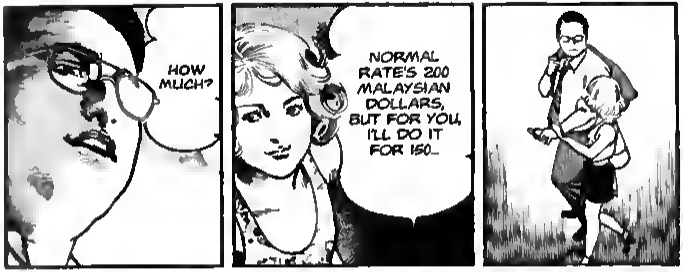
TOSHIBA

TOSHI

FLIK

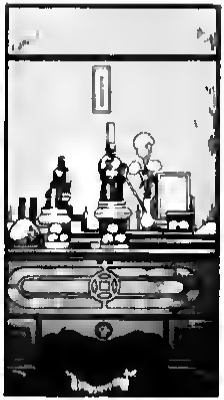
HEY, MISTER. I'LL SHOW YOU A GOOD TIME.
HOW OLD ARE YOU?
EIGHTEEN!
I'LL BET! YOUR MAKEUP CAN'T FOOL ME..
oh

I'LL SUCK YOU DRY!
GULP


HOW MUCH?
NORMAL RATE'S 200 MALAYSIAN DOLLARS, BUT FOR YOU, I'LL DO IT FOR 150_

HOTEL HAPPY INN

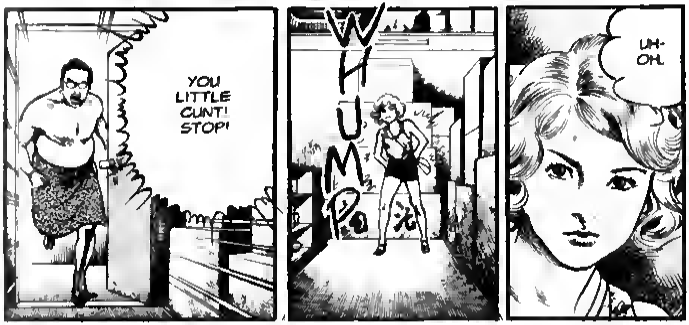
VIDEO CENTRAL

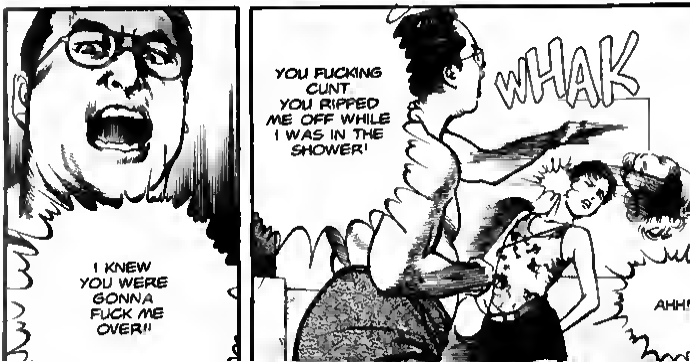


WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YOUR LIVING OFF THESE DRAWINGS?

真可惜
<WHAT A WASTE...>
VEEEEEP
MAYO.. YOUVE GOT A CUSTOMER. HOW ABOUT IT?
nod
OKAY... I'LL HAVE HIM GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU...
BIP
ARE YOU SURE? I MEAN, YOUVE NEVER MET THIS CLIENT...

SLAM


YOU LITTLE CUNT! STOP!
WHUMP
UH-OH.


I KNEW YOU WERE GONNA FUCK ME OVER!!
YOU FUCKING CUNT YOU RIPPED ME OFF WHILE I WAS IN THE SHOWER!
WHAK
AHH!

WAP
H-
HELP!
HEY, YOU—
OVER THERE!
HELP ME!
HE'S TAKING
MY WALLET!!

YOU BITCH!
KRAK
YOU THINK ANYONE'S GONNA LISTEN TO A LITTLE CUNT LIKE YOU!
BAM
THIS IS FOR THE DISTURBANCE! CONSIDER MY ACCOUNT SETTLED!

D-DAMN YOU!
IF YOU KNOW ANY-THING ABOUT THAT FELLOW WHO..
KNOCKS PEOPLE OFF FOR FIVE DOLLARS
..LET ME KNOW!
I WANNA *KILL* THAT GODDAMN JAP!!

...
HUH..
YOU FUCKERS CAN ROT IN HELL!
SLAMM

THAT GIRL'S NAME IS SHION... I THINK.
SHE'S ONLY TWELVE OR THIRTEEN AND SHE'S ALREADY BEEN THROUGH THIS MANY TIMES...
SHE DOESN'T WORK FOR ANY ORGANIZATION. SHE WALKS THE STREETS ALONE. HER LIFE WILL BE FULL OF PAIN...
...
I'VE GOT A JOB TO DO..

STRAIN 1
HEY, MISTER! 150... HELL, I'LL DO IT FOR 100...
McD
VIP
GO LOOK IN A MIRROR!
DAMN!
DAMN... DAMN...
...

LIFE IN THE BACK STREETS OF KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA, IS CHEAP. AND IT JUST GOT CHEAPER....

PULP GRAPHIC NOVELS—COMPILING THE HOTTEST MANGA FROM THE PAGES OF VIZ COMICS' REVOLUTIONARY MANGA MAGAZINE FOR GROWNUPS!

A human life is worth so little to professional assassin Mayo that he will kill you for *just five dollars*. But when the "Organization" hires him to murder the mother of teenage prostitute Shion, he takes pity on the two.

For his defiance, the leaders of the Organization pronounce a death sentence on our reluctant hero. Has Mayo bitten off more than he can chew?

Buronson is the acclaimed author of the political crime thriller **Sanctuary** *and the post-apocalyptic action-adventure saga* **Fist of the North Star**.

Ryoichi Ikegami is the world-renowned artist whose gritty, realistic, and erotic artwork graces the pages of **Sanctuary**, **Crying Freeman**, **Mai the Psychic Girl**, *and* **Samurai Crusader**. *He was awarded a coveted Ink Pot Award at the 1996 San Diego Comic Con.*

$16.95 USA/$24.25 CAN

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PULP GRAPHIC NOVEL
PUBLISHED BY VIZ

STRAIN

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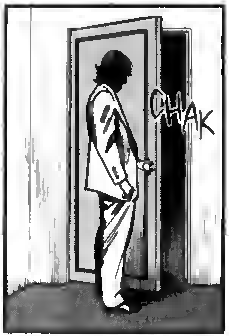
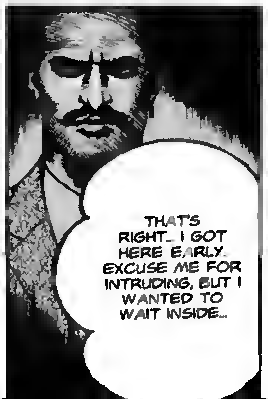
YOU LISTEN TO ME! YOU PEOPLE CAN DROOL OVER US JAPANESE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT, BUT ONE SNEEZE ON YOU BASTARDS AND YOUR COUNTRY'LL FALL LIKE A HOUSE OF CARDS!
GET IT!?
WHAP
WHAT THE—!? WATCH WHERE YOU'RE...

KRAK

EOAL GARAM


CHAK

YOU'RE MY CLIENT..


THAT'S RIGHT.. I GOT HERE EARLY. EXCUSE ME FOR INTRUDING, BUT I WANTED TO WAIT INSIDE..

KLIK

NOW I SEE WHY THEY CALL YOU "MAYO" — THE "HORSE"
BESIDES YOUR ALIAS, NO ONE KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT YOU..

TELL ME ABOUT THE JOB.
HERE'S THE NAME AND ADDRESS...

SO IT'S TRUE YOU ONLY CHARGE FIVE DOLLARS?
FWIP

WHY JUST FIVE...?

THAT'S ALL WE'RE WORTH...

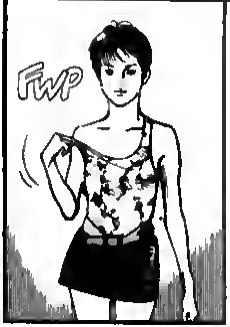
YOUR LIFE MUSTA BEEN EVEN MORE FUCKED UP THAN MINE.
Ishin Travel Bureau
KREE

FWAP

FSH

MOM, I'M HOME..
CHK
M-MOM!

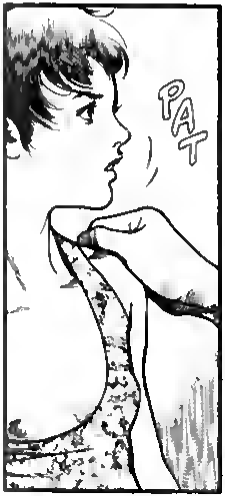
W-WHY..
WHY WOULD YOU SHOOT MY MOM!?
...
SHE'S REALLY SICK! SHE CAN'T EVEN WORK! WHY WOULD YOU KILL SOMEONE LIKE THAT!
...
W-WHY !?
CHK
WAIT !!

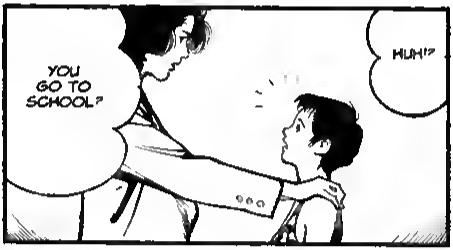

FWP

I'M STILL A VIRGIN..
I'LL GIVE IT UP FOR YOU..

...

FWIP


PAT


YOU GO TO SCHOOL?
HUH!?

WHAT'S FIVE PLUS FIVE?

HUH!? T-TEN..

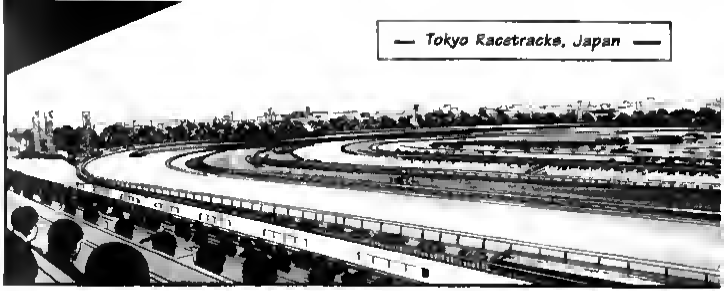
I WAS HIRED FOR FIVE DOLLARS..
JUST PAY ME THAT FIVE AND HIRE ME FOR ANOTHER FIVE..
...

YOU WASTED HER ALREADY? THAT WAS QUICK...
I HEAR YOU'RE NOT CURIOUS ABOUT YOUR CLIENTS' MOTIVES... THAT'S VERY CONVENIENT FOR US...
CHK
THAT'S RIGHT...
FWAP
HUH!? WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT?

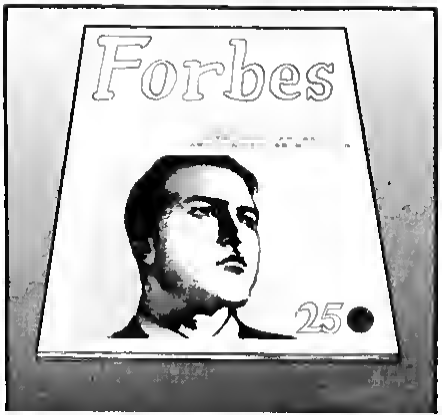
I'M ON THE PAYROLL OF THE OTHER SIDE NOW...
BLA
MM

I CAN'T BELIEVE ANYONE WOULD HAVE THE AUDACITY TO KILL THAT MAN..

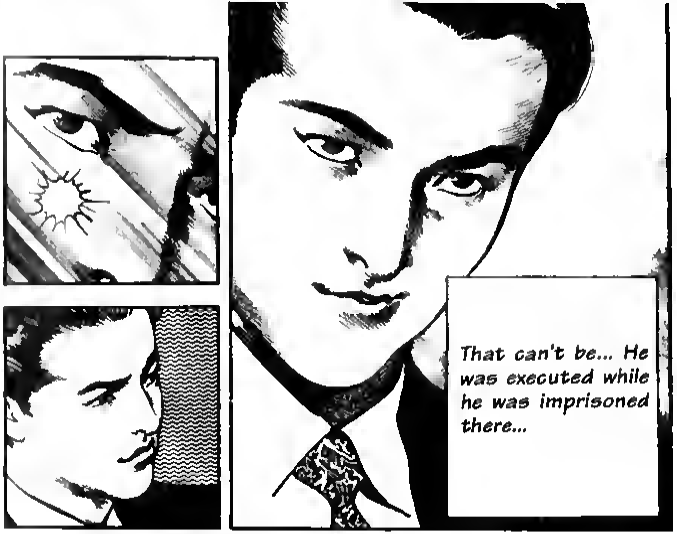
I-IT CAN'T BE..
SIR, WHAT'S WRONG?
I JUST SAW.. A GHOST..


— Tokyo Racetracks, Japan —

Forbes


Forbes
25

SO, MR. SHUNICHIRO KUSAKA, IS IT TRUE WHAT THIS FORBES SPECIAL ISSUE CLAIMS..
..WITH REGARD TO YOUR AMBITIONS AS THE YOUNG LEADER OF JAPAN'S CORPORATE GIANT KUSAKA?
LET'S NOT BOTHER OURSELVES WITH SUCH TRIFLES. WE SHOULD BE OBSERVING THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR MAJESTY'S HORSE..
..SENT ALL THE WAY FROM YOUR COUNTRY
SIR, WE JUST RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM SOMEONE CLAIMING..
..THAT HE SAW HIM IN KUALA LUMPUR..


That can't be... He was executed while he was imprisoned there...

KLOP KLOP KLOP KLOP

WE HAVE MAINTAINED OUR BLOOD LINES AND BREED, OUR PARTICULAR STRAIN_

LINEAGE IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL WHEN IT COMES TO RACE-HORSES..

STRAIN

As long as one person remains of the superior breed!

STRAIN
Jinchiseans
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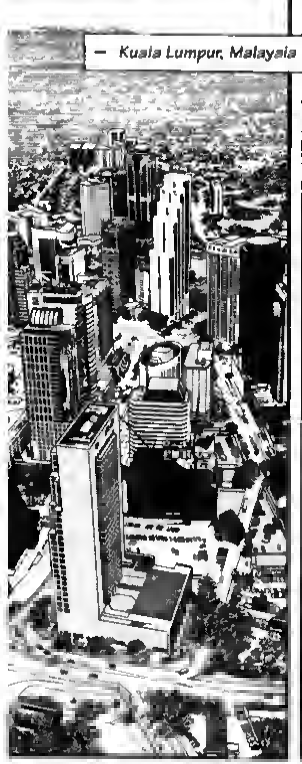
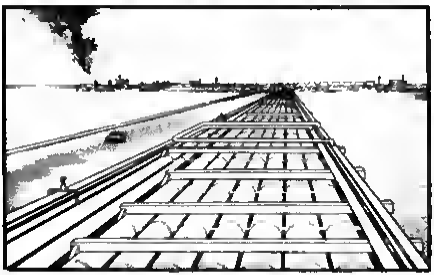
CHAPTER TWO THE GHOST

— Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia —



50	KUSAKA
49	KUSAKA
48	KUSAKA
47	[illegible]
46	[illegible]
45	[illegible]

KUSAKA



BWIP
AND THE "JOB" THIS MAN WAS SENT TO CARRY OUT..."
WE ASSUME IT WAS CONNECTED TO THE "ORGANIZATION" SOMEHOW
ALL RIGHT...

SIR. IS SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?
THAT GHOST I SAW YESTER-DAY...
GHOST?

IT'S ALL CONNECTED SOMEHOW
THAT GHOST AND THAT JOB.

Lot 10
会員制
Members Only

WHERE'S KYOKO? SOME GUESTS WANT HER.
VIP
VIP

LASER

MAYO.. YOU'RE JAPANESE, AREN'T YOU?

I CAN TELL BY YOUR SKIN.. THIS IS THE SKIN OF A JAPANESE..

SQUEE
I WANT IT.. I WANT IT NOW, MAYO!

GIVE IT TO ME..

YYES
AHHHH
MMN

MM
MM
MM
AHH

FWAP

Members Only
SA
SO YOU KILLED YOUR CLIENT?
HOW DO YOU KNOW HE WAS MY CLIENT?
HE'S A MEMBER OF THE ORGANIZATION

I JUST RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM ONE OF THEM.
SIGH
WELL, YOU WON'T EXPLAIN. AND EVEN IF YOU DID, I'D RATHER NOT KNOW ANYWAY..
BUT, MAYO.. LISTEN TO ME. DON'T UNDER ESTIMATE THE ORGANIZATION.

THEY WON'T OVERLOOK THIS.
THEY FIND THOSE WHO KILL THEIR OWN
...

WHUMP
KRESH
M-MAYO!
YANG!
HELP ME, MAYO!

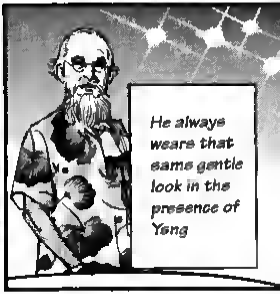
YOU IDIOT! WHAT KIND OF BOOKIE BOY PUTS HIS SHOP'S MONEY ON THE HORSES!? HUH?
YOU TELLIN ME YOU HAVE TWO THOUSAND TO COVER YOUR LOSSES, YANG!?
UNH.
BUT IF I'DA RAKED IT IN, EVERYONE WOULDA BEEN HAPPY, RIGHT?
THAT'S BESIDE THE POINT, DIRTBAG!

VIP
VIP
SHLK
AARGH!

W-WHY YOU--
FMP
SHEE
AHH!
HE'LL DO IT WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT...
BETTER GO NOW, IF YOU WANT TO STAY IN ONE PIECE.

NOD
YOU BASTARDS! HEH HEH!
SO YOU SPENT THEIR MONEY AGAIN?
HA HA HA.. THEY NEVER LEARN SEE WHAT YA GET FOR MAKIN ME COLLECT BETS!?
CHMP
MAYO! I'LL TAKE YOU OUT

FWAP
I'M NOT SO DUMB THAT I'D USE UP ALL MY CASH. I PUT ENOUGH AWAY FOR WOMEN AND FOOD...


He always wears that same gentle look in the presence of Yang

But what has he seen that makes him believe...
...a human life is only worth five dollars?

HEY, SAI! HEADING HOME SO SOON!?
YES

I've other business to take care of..
And I don't want to get on the wrong side of the organization.

SHHH
BAP
BAPPITA
BAP
BAP
HEY, MAYO. EVERY TIME WE GO BY THIS PRISON, YOU ALWAYS LOOK THE OTHER WAY!
VIP

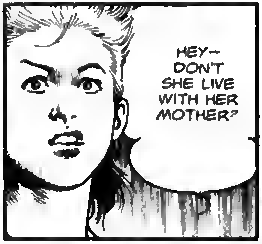
HOW COME?
JUST A HABIT..
shtpf
WHAT EVER!
I'M NOT DROPPIN YOU OFF YET! WE GOTTA HAVE US SOME FUN ON ACCOUNT OF THIS GNARLY RAIN LET'S GO GET US SOME BABES!
VROOOM

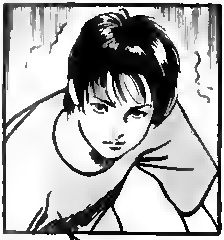
華東旅社

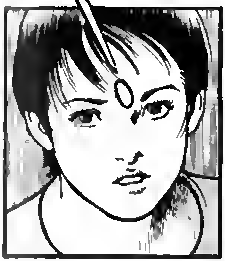
SKREECH
IT DOESN'T LOOK TOO NICE BUT THERE'RE SOME *HOT ONES* HERE SOMETIMES

CHAK
HUH!? WHAT'S GOIN' ON?
華東旅社
China Travel Bureau

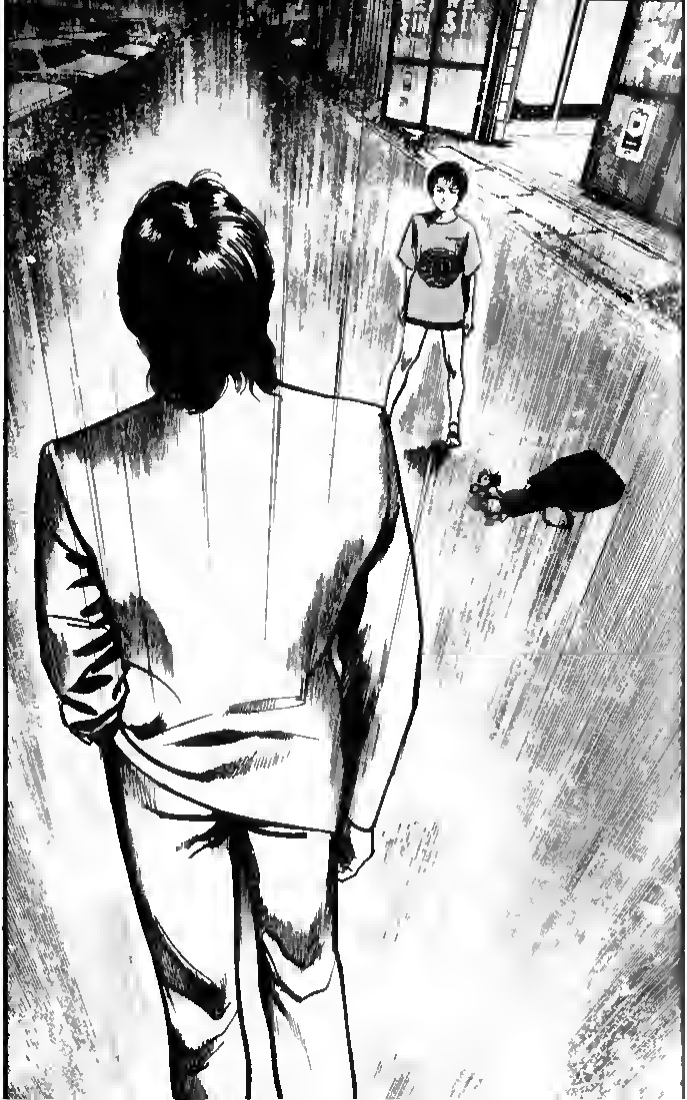
BAM
東旅社


HEY-- DON'T SHE LIVE WITH HER MOTHER?





M-MY MOM... MY MOM IS...
THAT'S A JAPANESE DOLL...
So she's... Japanese?



STRAIN
Jinchiseans
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CHAPTER THREE
STRAY KITTEN

Th-they know each other!?
WE LET YOUR MOM STAY 'CAUSE SHE WAS GOOD TO ME A LONG TIME AGO, BUT NOW THAT SHE'S CROAKED, YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN!
GOT THAT!? GET OUTTA HERE!

HOTE

MAYO...
M-MAYO! SHE'S SHAKING!
HOW CAN YOU JUST LEAVE HER HERE LIKE THIS!?

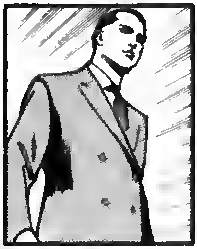
UNNH...
TUGG
W WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?

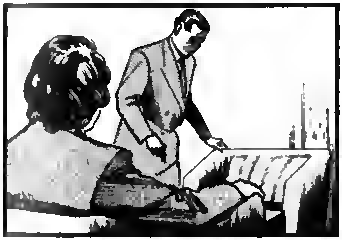
KRA
KOOM
KRAKKA
KRAK
KOOM

CHAK
YOU NEVER LOCK YOUR DOOR?
NINE LIVES WOULDN'T BE ENOUGH FOR YOU..
GO AHEAD, I DON'T CARE
..

PAP
SO YOU FINISHED THE JOB?
SOME-BODY HAD TO
BUT WHEN I GOT THERE SHE WAS ALREADY DEAD
YOU KNEW HER DAUGHTER WAS SHION, DIDN'T YOU?
..from her illness I saw the girl crying over her...

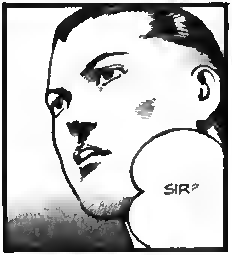
THAT'S WHY YOU DIDN'T KILL HER...
NOW, I REGRET IT...
I SHOULDVE SHOT THEM BOTH...
SHE'LL NEVER MAKE IT ON HER OWN
MAYO...





MR. MURAI.
THE "JOB" HAS BEEN COMPLETED

AOKI...
HOW IMPORTANT DO YOU THINK THAT WOMAN WAS?

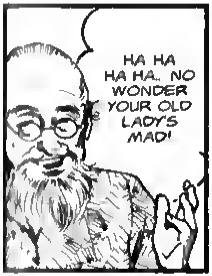

SIR?

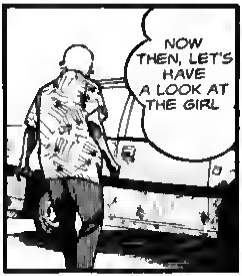
SHE WAS WORTH MILLIONS — NO, BILLIONS IT WOULDN'T BE AN EXAGGERATION TO SAY SHE WAS WORTH HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS OF YEN..
8-BILLIONS !?
IT'S THE VALUE OF HER "STRAIN"
OUR SUPERIORS ORDERED US TO TAKE CARE OF THE MOTHER..
BUT I THINK WE SHOULD GET RID OF THE GIRL, TOO.

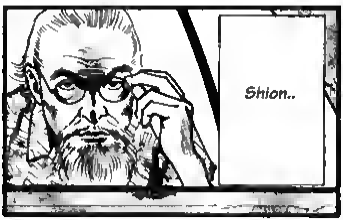
SKREECH
CHUD
S-SAI! YOU'RE HERE!
YOU GOTTA HELP ME! PLEASE!
PICKED UP ANOTHER STRAY CAT, EH?
NO— NOT A CAT! AND THIS ONE'S BIG TROUBLE!

SKRITCH
YOWTCH!
YOU COME HOME SO LATE AND THEN YOU TELL ME YOU PICKED UP SOME GIRL!?
YOU BASTARD!
BESIDES, IVE HAD IT UP TO HERE WITH YOUR STUPID CATS!
TAKE A HIKE, JERK-OFF!
THOK
WHUD
OWWW!

H-HEH SHE WON'T LET US IN


HA HA HA HA.. NO WONDER YOUR OLD LADY'S MAD!


NOW THEN, LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT THE GIRL

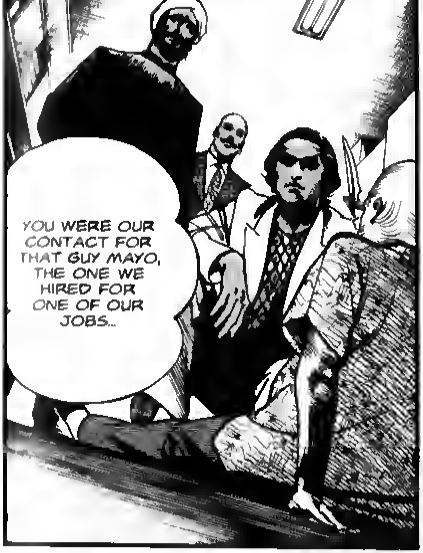

Shion..

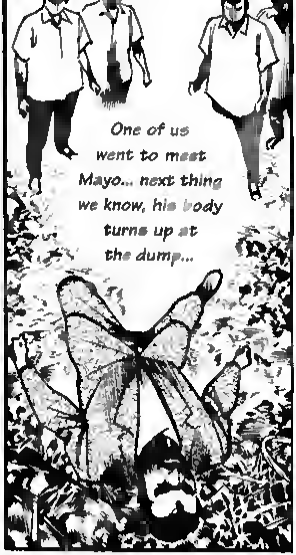
PLEASE— YOU GOTTA HELP ME
PLEASE!

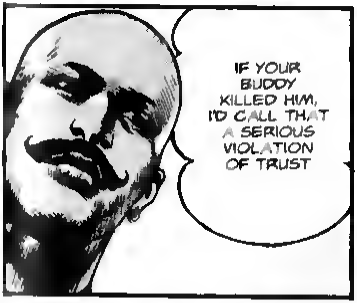
Taking care of a kitten might soften him up a little...
AND SO OLD MAN SAI SAID SHE SHOULD STAY HERE!
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT, TOO, BUT YOU LOOKED SO SCARY LAST NIGHT I WAS AFRAID TO ASK.

GO ON IN! TAKE A HOT SHOWER BEFORE YOU CATCH A COLD!
...
DON'T YOU WORRY MAYO CAN'T SAY NO TO OLD MAN SAI!

OUR BUSINESS IS TO BE CONDUCTED ONLY BY PHONE — AREN'T WE BREAKING THE RULES HERE!?
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK ABOUT BREAKING RULES!
SNIK


YOU WERE OUR CONTACT FOR THAT GUY MAYO, THE ONE WE HIRED FOR ONE OF OUR JOBS..

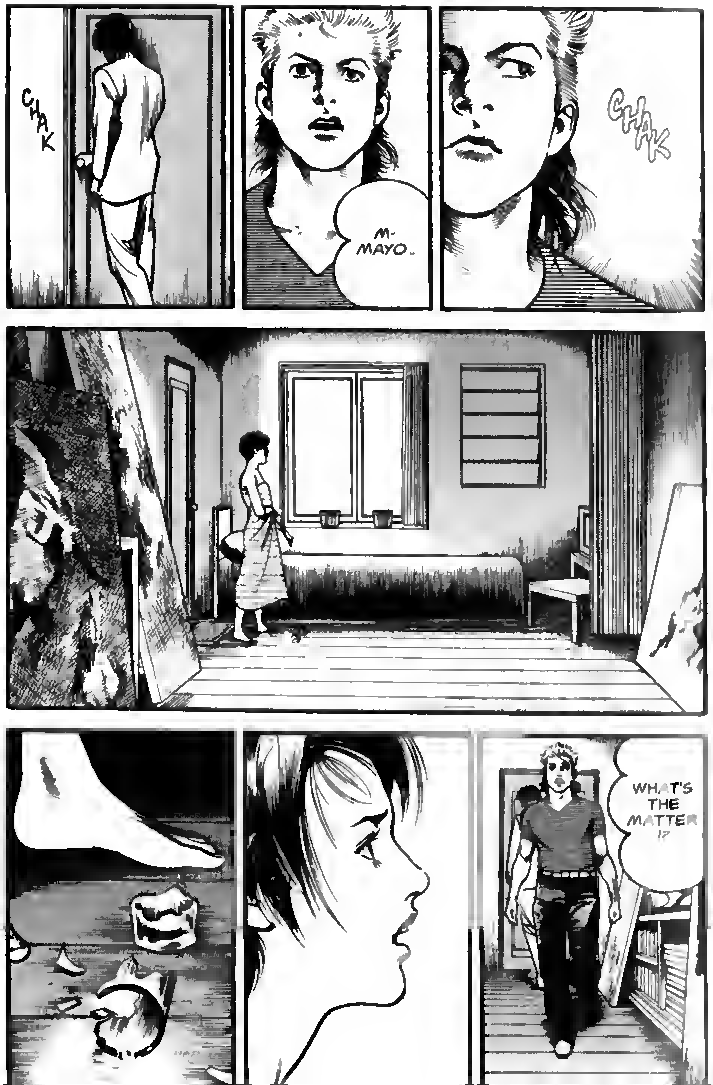

One of us went to meet Mayo... next thing we know, his body turns up at the dump...

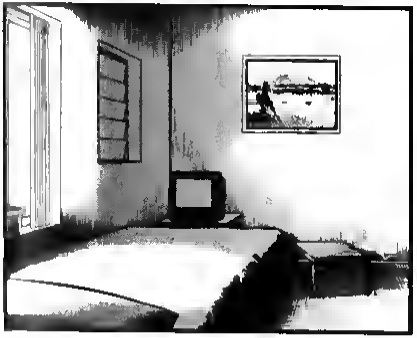

IF YOUR BUDDY KILLED HIM, I'D CALL THAT A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF TRUST

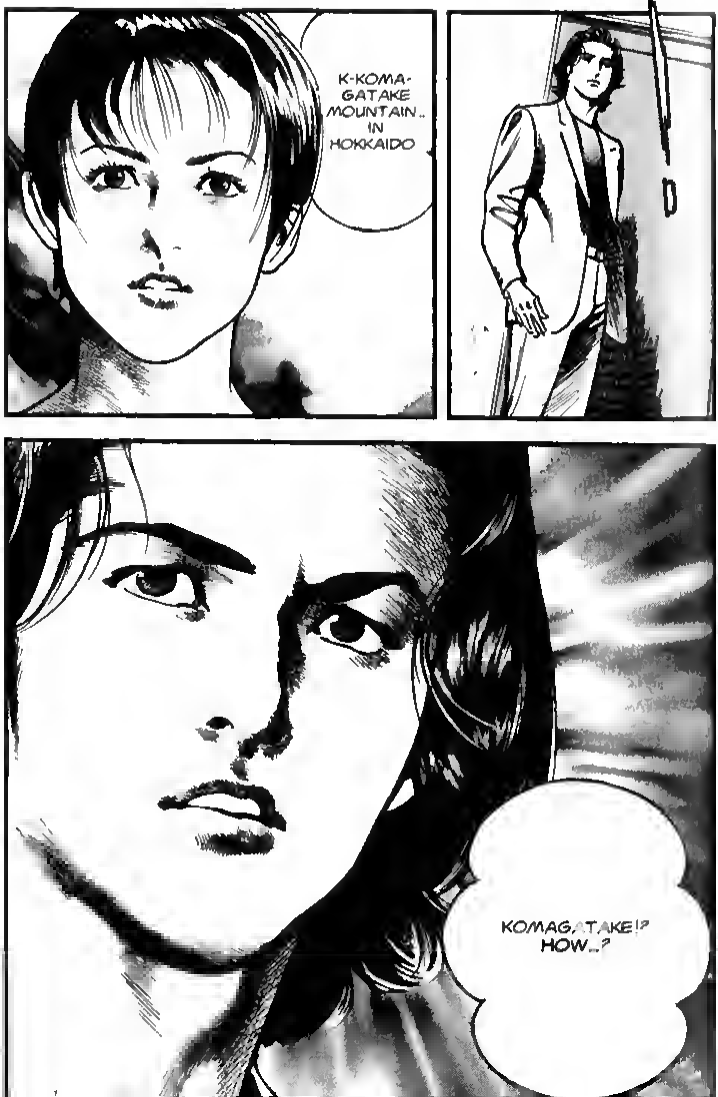
YOUVE GOT IT ALL WRONG! THE JOB WAS CARRIED OUT

ALL RIGHT THEN..
HERE'S ANOTHER ASSIGNMENT.. WE WANT MAYO TO TAKE CARE OF IT...
FWIP
IF HE WASTES HER, WE'LL BELIEVE YOU

IF HE DOESN'T WE'LL KNOW HE'S GUILTY!
...
HEY, MAYO. WHERE YOU GOIN'?
AS LONG AS YOU LOOK AFTER HER, I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU DO.. IVE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH HER.


CHAK
M-MAYO.
CHAK
WHAT'S THE MATTER!?




K-KOMA-GATAKE MOUNTAIN.. IN HOKKAIDO
D
KOMAGATAKE!? HOW..?

STRAIN
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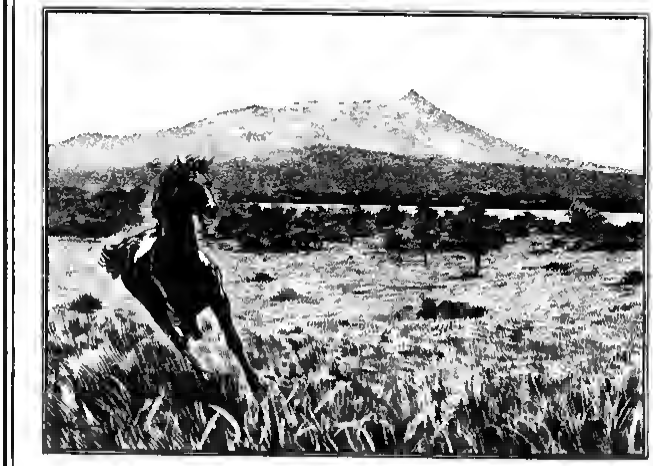
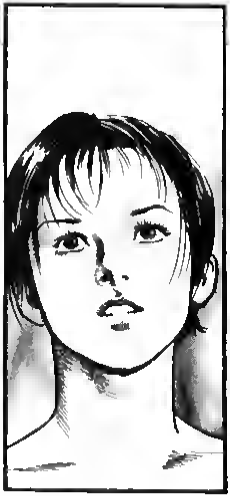
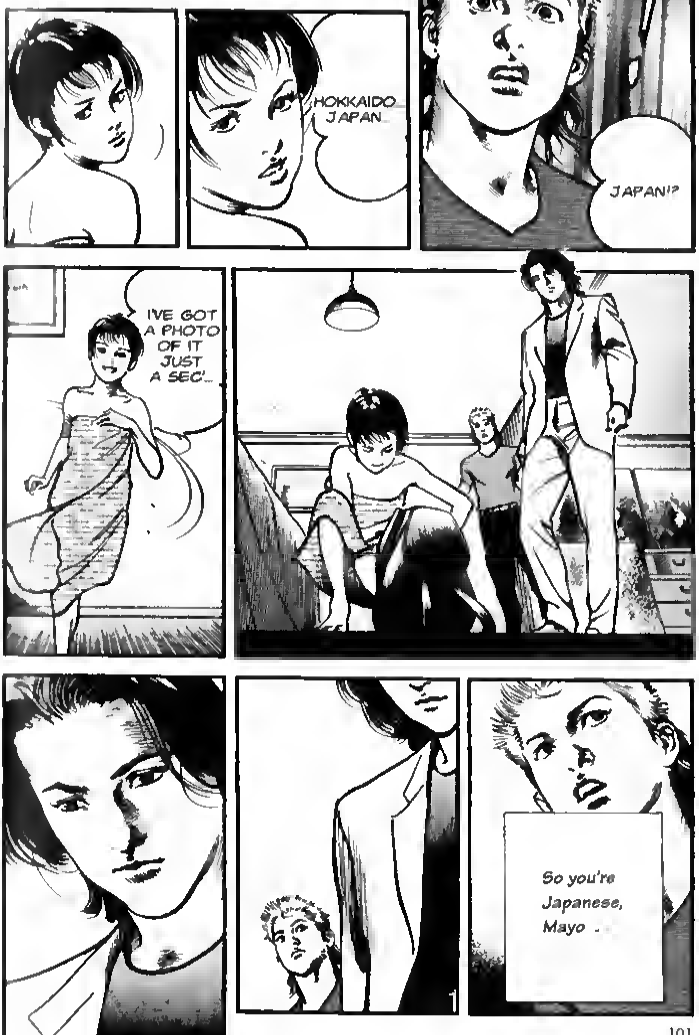
CHAPTER FOUR
KOMAGATAKE





KOMAGA TAKE? YOU MEAN THIS MOUNTAIN?

WHERE IS IT?

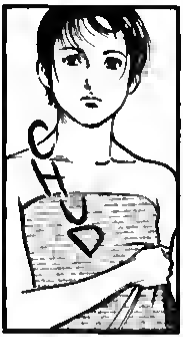

HOKKAIDO JAPAN
JAPAN!?
I'VE GOT A PHOTO OF IT JUST A SEC'...
So you're Japanese, Mayo -

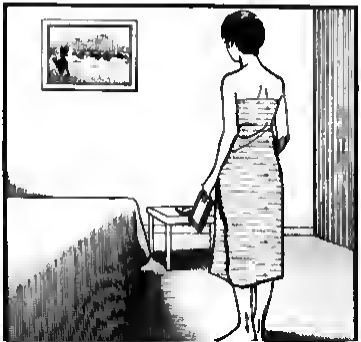
ZZIP
LOOK... IT'S THE SAME PLACE
WITH MY MOM...
SO YOUR MOTHER WAS JAPANESE?

NO!
MY DAD'S JAPANESE. HE TOOK THE PICTURE...
...
VEEP
VEEP
ALL RIGHT
YANG. TAKE HER TO SAI'S PLACE
chak

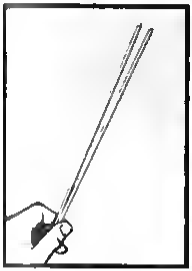
HERE THIS MUST MEAN A LOT TO YOU KEEP IT TUCKED AWAY.

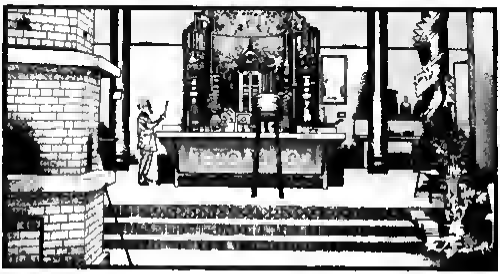
GET DRESSED AND GET SOME SLEEP WE'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING ELSE LATER


CHUD



Why would he know that mountain...?

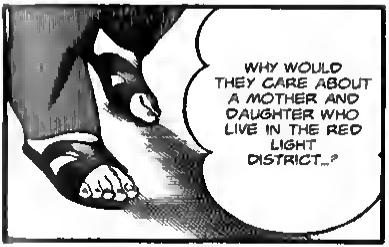




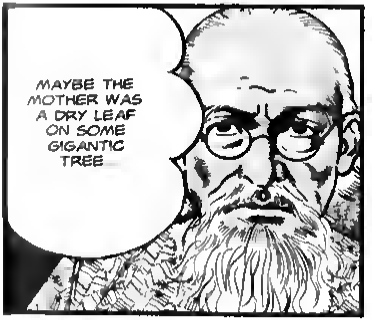
SO NOW WE MUST SLAY THE KITTEN THAT WAS TO SOFTEN HIM UP.

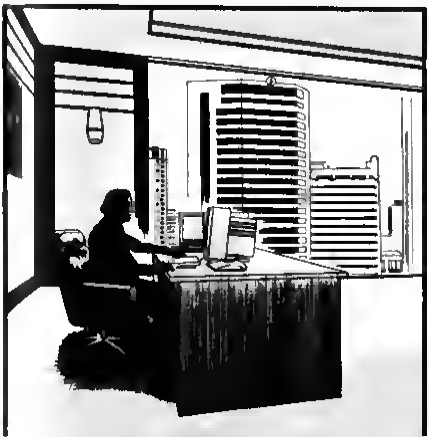
WHAT A WASTE

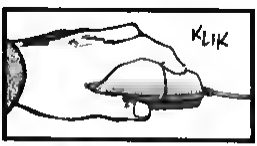
KILL SHION!?
IF YOU DON'T, THE ORGANIZATION WILL COME AFTER YOU
TO BE HONEST, I DON'T WANT THEM ON ANY TAIL EITHER...

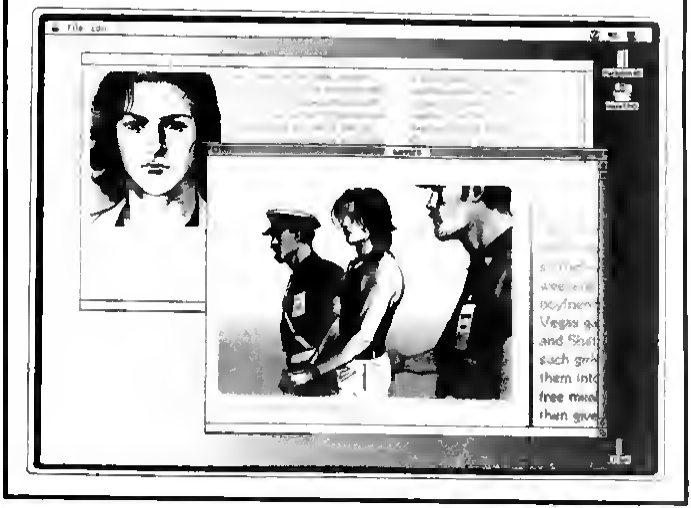

WHY WOULD THEY CARE ABOUT A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER WHO LIVE IN THE RED LIGHT DISTRICT...?

THERE'S AN OLD CHINESE SAYING, "A TREE WON'T GROW IF YOU DON'T REMOVE ITS DRY LEAVES."

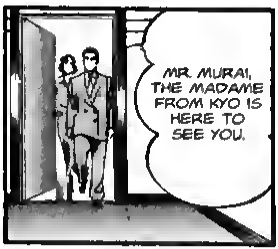

MAYBE THE MOTHER WAS A DRY LEAF ON SOME GIGANTIC TREE...




KLIK



CHK


MR. MURAI, THE MADAME FROM KYO IS HERE TO SEE YOU.

HELLO..
HERE'S THE LIST OF GIRLS ARRIVING ON NEXT WEEK'S FLIGHT
KLOP
THANKS..
THESE JAPANESE CUTIES ARE THE BEST BARGAINING CHIPS FOR OUR NEGOTIATIONS..
THEY'RE PORN ACTRESSES, BUT THEY'RE STILL STARS AND DON'T FORGET, WE EXPECT TO BE PAID ON TIME..

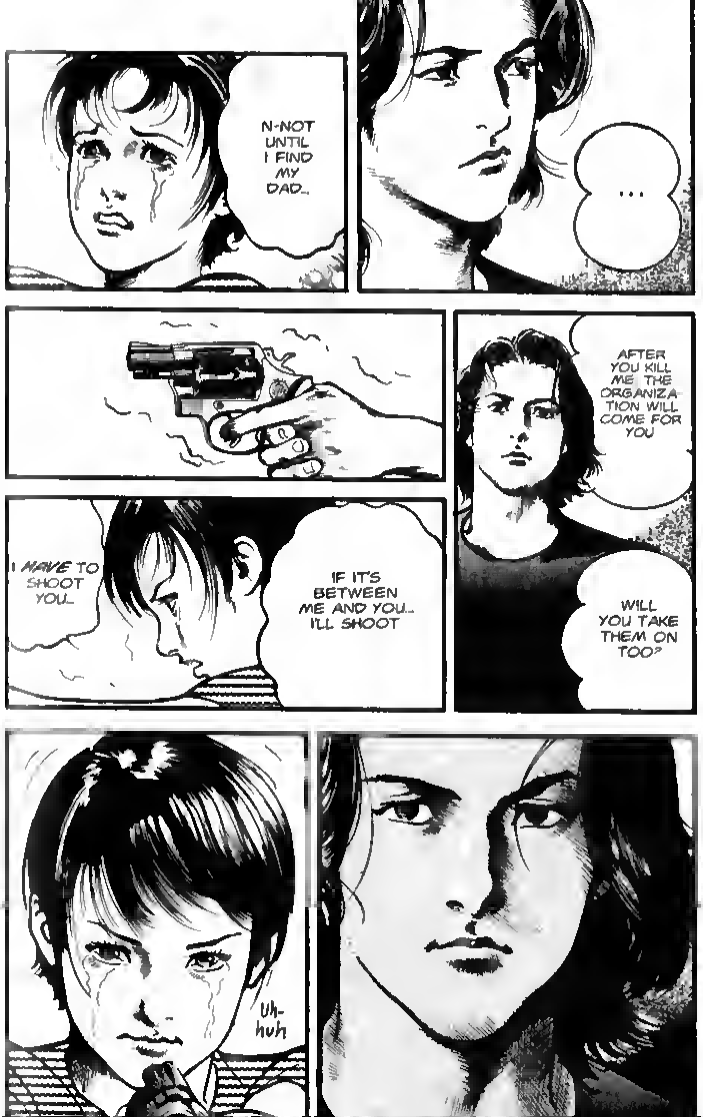
DON'T OVERDO IT, OR YOU'LL GET CAUGHT...
YOU LOOK BUSY... NO POINT TAKING UP ANY MORE OF YOUR TIME
KLIK
I'LL DROP BY THE CLUB SOMETIME SOON...
CHUD
That was MAYO'S face...
What interest could Kusaka possibly have in Mayo?

shf
CHAK
AH!

M-ME?
YEAH.
YOU CAN EITHER DIE BY MY HAND OR...
...KILL ME AND MAKE A RUN FOR IT.
SHK
...

IT'S UP TO YOU.
M MAYO
FWAP
SO WHAT'S IT GONNA BE?
I WANNA LIVE!!

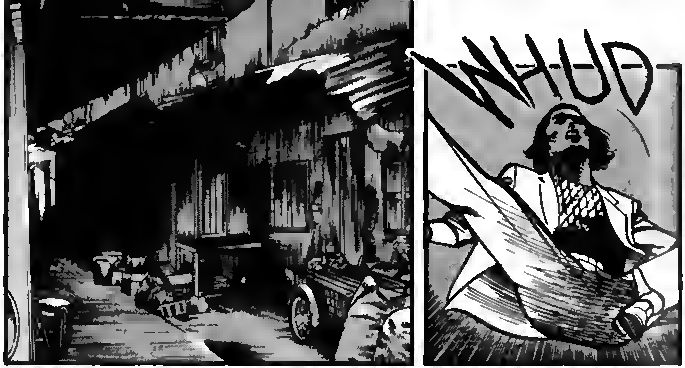
I CAN'T DIE!
I'VE GOTTA LIVE!
THE LONGER YOU LIVE, THE MORE YOU'RE GOING TO SUFFER
I-I DON'T CARE!
I CAN'T DIE UNTIL I GO TO JAPAN
THAT'S WHY I WAS WORKING THE STREETS TO SAVE UP ENOUGH MONEY TO FIND MY DAD...


N-NOT UNTIL I FIND MY DAD..
...
AFTER YOU KILL ME, THE ORGANIZATION WILL COME FOR YOU
WILL YOU TAKE THEM ON TOO?
I HAVE TO SHOOT YOU..
IF IT'S BETWEEN ME AND YOU.. I'LL SHOOT
Uh-huh

SLAP
AIEE!
M MAYO
YOU CAN'T DO IT

I HAD A HUNCH HE WAS JAPANESE ALL ALONG
WHAT AN ODD COINCIDENCE ...THE GIRL'S GOT JAPANESE BLOOD IN HER TOO
MAYO..

HOW MANY ARE THERE IN THE ORGANIZATION?
H-HE'S GONNA TAKE ON THE ORGANIZATION!?
heh
Aha-ha-ha
NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY MAYO ALWAYS LOOKS AT YOU SO KINDLY
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE THE KIND OF BOY WHO PICKS UP STRAY CATS


WHUD

CHAK!

WHO ASKED THE ORGANIZATION TO DO THESE KILLINGS?
TELL ME, AND I'LL LET YOU GO..

SHAMI! YOU ALL RIGHT!?
SH SHINGO!
IT'S ME, BARA! WE DID TIME TOGETHER IN PRISON, REMEMBER!?

BUDDA

STRAIN
Jinchiseans
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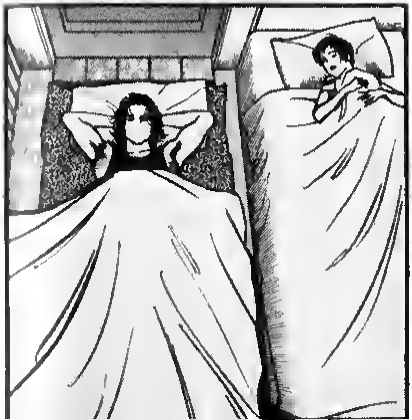
CHAPTER FIVE
DEATH SENTENCE



TMP TMP
MAYO! IT'S ME, YANG!
RTTL RTTL
DAMN, HE'S LOCKED THE DOOR. FUNNY, HE'S NEVER DONE THAT BEFORE
RTTL RTTL
NOD
ALL PACKED UP, SHION?

DID THEY TELL YOU WHO HIRED THE ORGANIZATION?
NO

I DIDN'T THINK SO ONLY THEIR TOP MEN WOULD KNOW...
THAT'S HOW POWERFUL THIS CLIENT MUST BE

WE'VE GOT TO MOVE SHION TO A SAFER PLACE AS SOON AS WE CAN
YOU'LL BE BETTER OFF THAT WAY, TOO

MAYO... OLD MAN SAI... SHE'S READY TO GO
WHY...
WHY CAN'T I STAY HERE?
...
FAP
MAYO...
YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT TO JAPAN IF YOU STAY HERE

MAYO IS JAPANESE, ISN'T HE?
YEAH, I THINK SO.
WHAT MADE HIM INTO AN ASSASSIN...
...WHO KILLS PEOPLE FOR FIVE BUCKS?
!?
BEATS ME!
I DOUBT ANYONE KNOWS.
SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED SOMETHING SO TERRIBLE THAT IT MADE HIM LEAVE HIS PAST BEHIND...

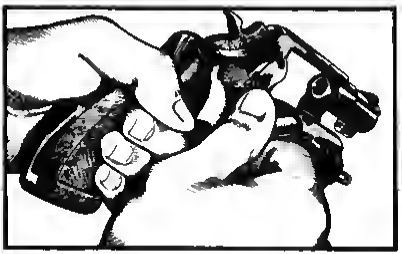
Three years have passed already... since I met him for the first time in the slums of Kuala Lumpur...
PURE WATER
WHUMP
My line of work is dangerous.
That night, I had a dispute with a Thai gang over the sale of some stolen goods.
FWAP
SMEK

AHH..!
SHA
AAA
FA
P

CHAK
BLAM
BLAM
WHUD
HSSS
FIVE DOLLARS A SHOT. YOU OWE ME TEN.

...
THAT WAS HOW WE MET
...
HE MAY HAVE LEFT HIS PAST BEHIND...
..BUT LAST NIGHT WAS THE FIRST TIME HE'S EVER LOCKED HIS ROOM SINCE IVE KNOWN HIM.
His will to live has returned... and will remain as long as this kitten stays alive!

45 CALIBER
"STOL CARTRIDGES



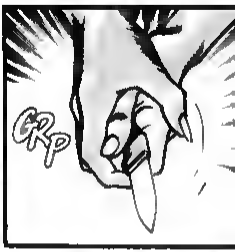
CHAK

ALL DEAD?
YEP. SHOT STRAIGHT THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF THEIR FOREHEADS
WHAT ABOUT SAI?
HE'S CLOSED UP SHOP AND DISAPPEARED
SO MAYO DID OUR OTHER GUY TOO.
WE'VE GOT TWO JOBS NOW OUR CLIENT'S ASSIGNMENT AND GIVING THAT TRAITOR WHAT'S COMING TO HIM.
HEY, KRISHNA.
YOU KNOW WHO WE'RE GONNA HAVE TO HIRE TO DO IT...
YEAH. HE'LL WRAP THINGS UP NICELY

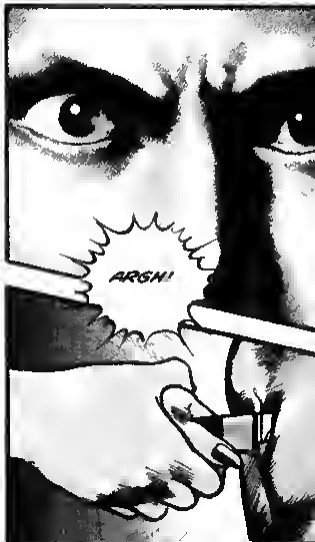
IT'S NOT GOING TO BE AS CUT AND DRIED AS YOU THINK...
...HIRING *HIM* PUTS OUR *OWN* LIVES AT RISK.
WHAK

HUF
HUF
I TOLD YOU TO STAB ME HARDER!

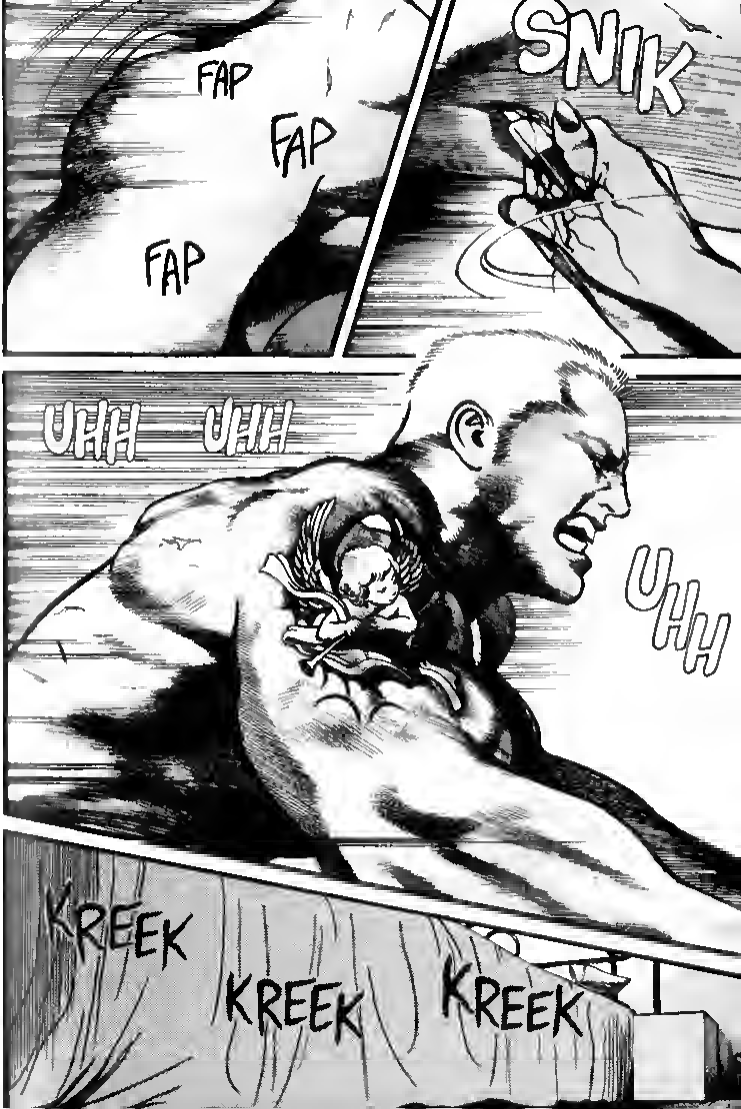
AHHH..


GRP

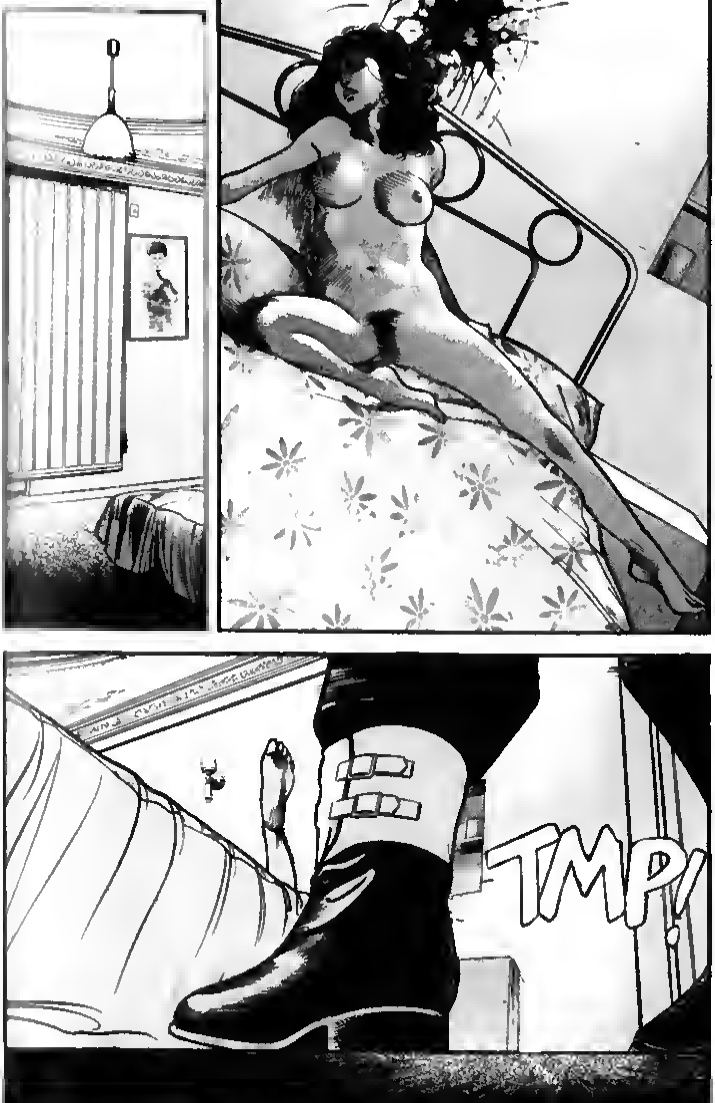
STAB


ARGH!

THAT'S IT.. THAT'S HOW I LIKE IT..
SQU
EE
STICK IT IN DEEPER! HARDER!!
FAP
FAP
FAP

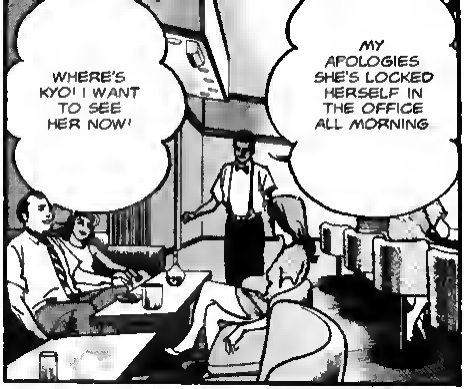

FAP
FAP
FAP
SNIK
UHH UHH
UHH
KREEK
KREEK
KREEK

HUF HFF HUF
H-HEY! WHAT ABOUT MY MONEY?
HUH!?
BLAMM
BLAM
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING! AFTER STABBING ME?

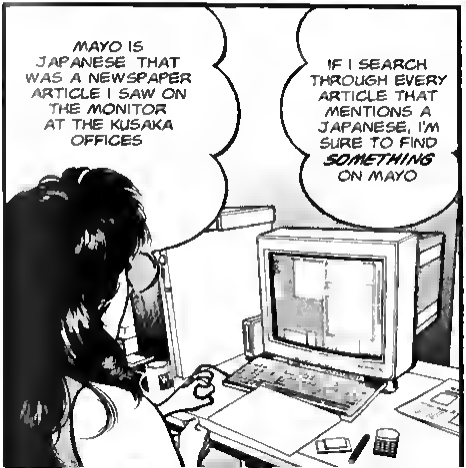

TMP!

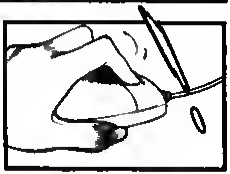
BREEP
BREEP
KRISHNA?
WHADDYA
WANT?

KYO
Members Only

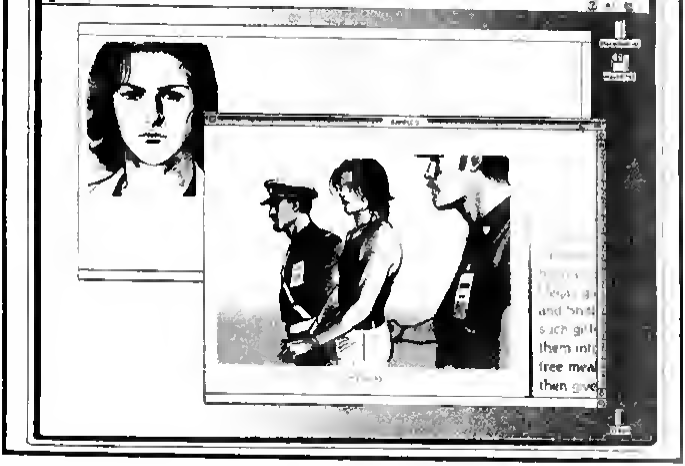

WHERE'S KYO! I WANT TO SEE HER NOW!
MY APOLOGIES SHE'S LOCKED HERSELF IN THE OFFICE ALL MORNING

OFFICE


MAYO IS JAPANESE THAT WAS A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE I SAW ON THE MONITOR AT THE KUSAKA OFFICES
IF I SEARCH THROUGH EVERY ARTICLE THAT MENTIONS A JAPANESE, I'M SURE TO FIND SOMETHING ON MAYO



MAYO..



Japanese traveller sentenced to death for drug smuggling

日本人旅行者、麻薬密輸で死刑判決！

They're bound to look for me here.

MA FEIMA VIDEO CENTRAL
堂 春 公
POLIS
CHUD

STRAIN

#Manga-SketchbookCDalnet

CHAPTER SIX
BLUE SKY

KR
RSH
SHA
He's in there

CHA
VWOOP!

FWOOM

HEH.
SHIT! THERE'S A BACK DOOR!?
BAM

BLAM
BLAM
UHN!
WHUP

WHAMM
CHRIST...

HEH HEH HEH. IT'S BEEN AWHILE SINCE IVE BEEN THIS HARD..
TUGG
MEM MEM..
SLRP
HE'S MINE..
ALL MINE...

WHAT A SPREAD! THERE'S EVEN A POOL!
I CAN'T FIGURE YOU OUT, OLD MAN SAI YOU JUST SNAP YOUR FINGERS AND SUDDENLY WE'RE IN A POSH JOINT LIKE THIS

HERE YOU GO..
THANKS
SHION.. HOW'RE YOU GONNA FIND YOUR DAD IF YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HIS NAME?
DIDN'T YOUR MOTHER EVER SAY?
Uh-uh
SHE WOULDN'T TELL ME, NO MATTER HOW MUCH I BEGGED HER.
SHE SAID IT WOULD ONLY CAUSE TROUBLE FOR MY FATHER..
TROUBLE? WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

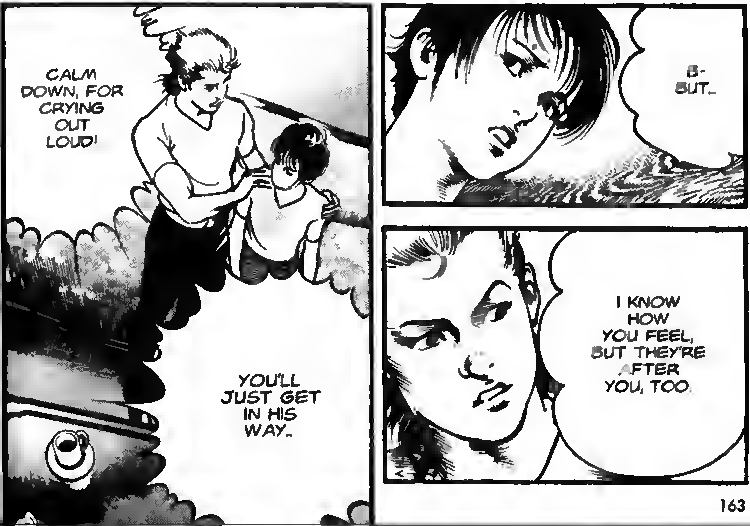
BUT HE DIDN'T JUST USE HER THEY WERE REALLY IN LOVE! SHE SWORE THAT WAS TRUE! AND THAT'S HOW I GOT TO BE BORN
...
"Trouble" Hmm...
That could explain why things ended so miserably for her mother ..
BREEP BREEP
MAYO... WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT!? THE SHOP!?

THAT'S RIGHT. I DIDN'T GET BURNED TOO BADLY.
HE WAS WEARING A POLICE UNIFORM. ANY IDEAS?
"P-POLICE"!?
IT MUST BE ANGEL! THAT WOULD FIT HIS MO!
"ANGEL"...?

AS A COP HE USES HIS REAL NAME, BUT IN THE UNDERWORLD, HE GOES BY "ANGEL"...
HE'S A TRICKY CAT I CAN'T BELIEVE THE ORGANIZATION HIRED HIM...
HE'S GOT A REPUTATION IN MALAYSIA AS A "KILLING MACHINE."
LISTEN, MAYO! FORGET ABOUT FAIR PLAY!
HE WOULDN'T THINK TWICE ABOUT SHOOTING SOMEONE IN THE BACK! REMEMBER THAT!

ALL RIGHT.
KLIK
I'D RATHER TAKE ON THE ENTIRE ORGANIZATION THAN ONE ANGEL!

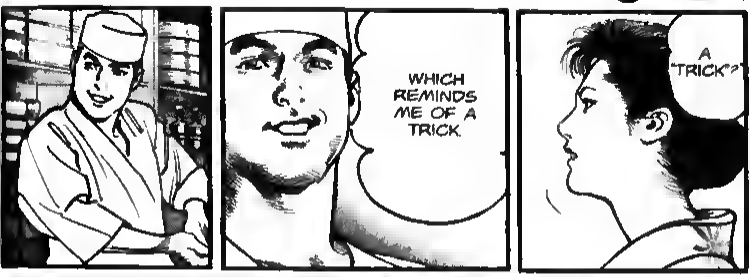
SHA
I-I'M GOING TOO.
SH-SHION!

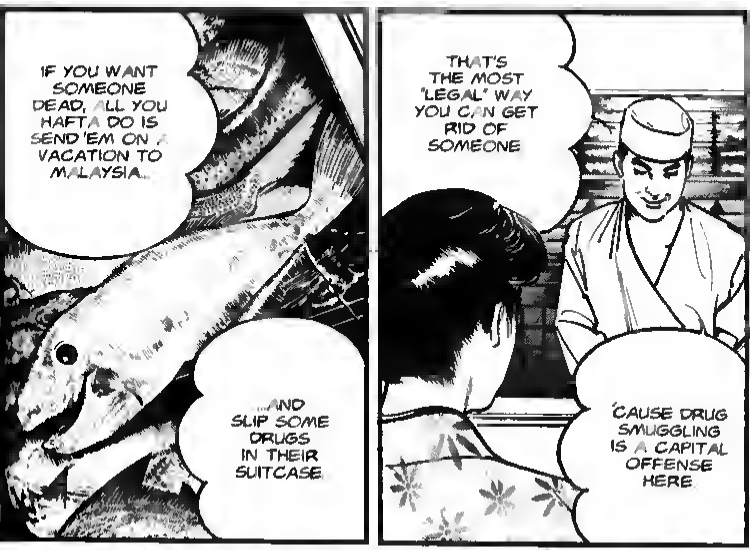

CALM DOWN, FOR CRYING OUT LOUD!
YOU'LL JUST GET IN HIS WAY.
B-BUT...
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, BUT THEY'RE AFTER YOU, TOO.

HIS VOICE SOUNDS DIFFERENT
HE WANTS TO LIVE NOW
HE'S BEGINNING TO FIGHT TO BRING HIMSELF BACK

I FORGOT... HOW BLUE THE SKY IS...

SUSHI
江戸春
HERE YOU GO!
SO, WHAT D'YOU WANT TO KNOW, KYOKO?
YOU'VE LIVED HERE A LONG TIME...
DID YOU EVER HEAR ABOUT A YOUNG JAPANESE GUY GETTING ARRESTED FOR DRUG SMUGGLING ABOUT THREE YEARS AGO?
YEAH, I GUESS SO...
WASN'T HE EXECUTED?
EXECUTED !?
THAT'S WHAT I HEARD


WHICH REMINDS ME OF A TRICK.
A "TRICK"?


IF YOU WANT SOMEONE DEAD, ALL YOU HAFTA DO IS SEND 'EM ON A VACATION TO MALAYSIA...
...AND SLIP SOME DRUGS IN THEIR SUITCASE.
THAT'S THE MOST 'LEGAL' WAY YOU CAN GET RID OF SOMEONE
'CAUSE DRUG SMUGGLING IS A CAPITAL OFFENSE HERE

IF MAYO -SHINGO KUSAKA- WAS KILLED LIKE THAT, THEN..
SKREECHH

CHUD!
M-MAYO...
I'VE LOST MY HOME
CAN YOU PUT ME UP? JUST FOR ONE NIGHT?

MAYO... HEH HEH HEH...

SNUGGLE

STRAIN

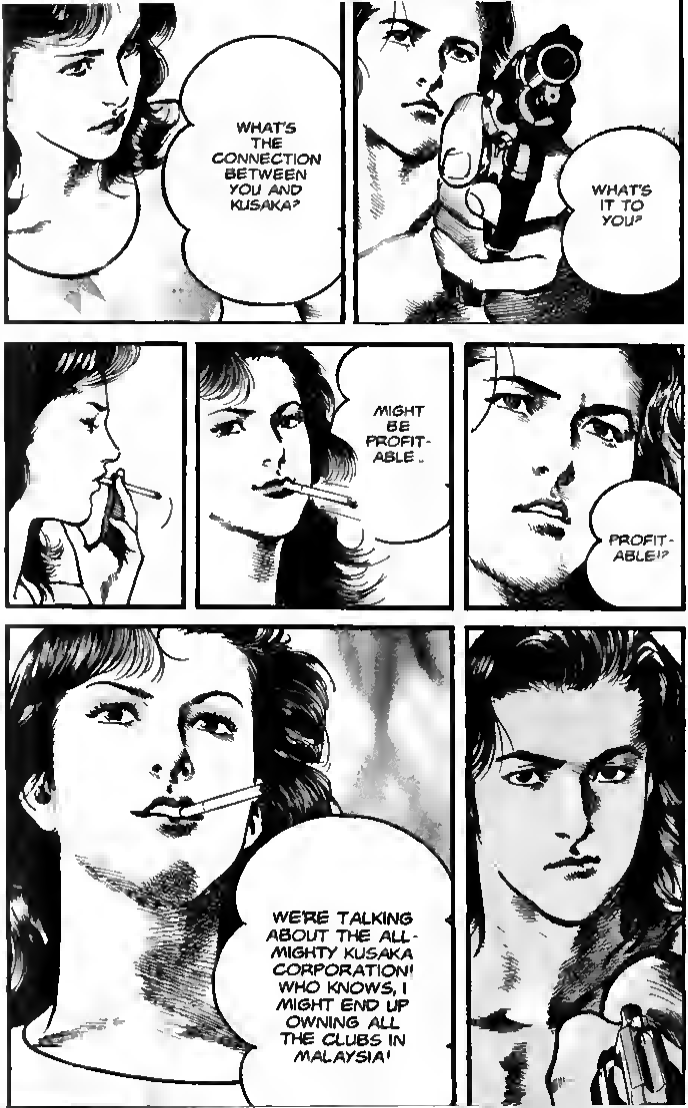
#Manga-SketchbookCDalnet

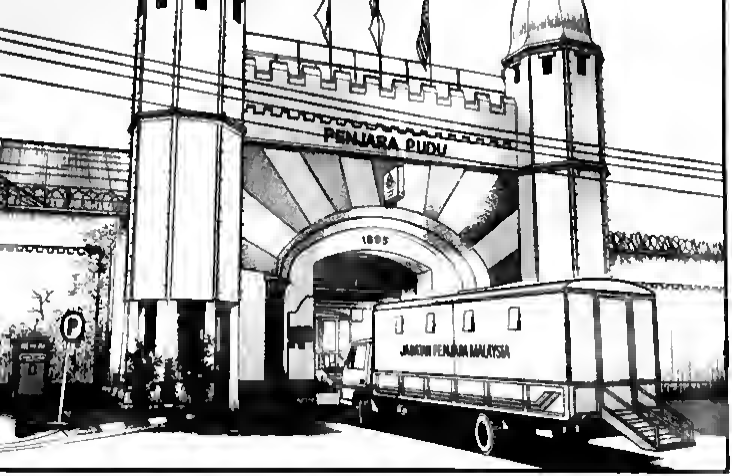
CHAPTER SEVEN
THE PHOTO

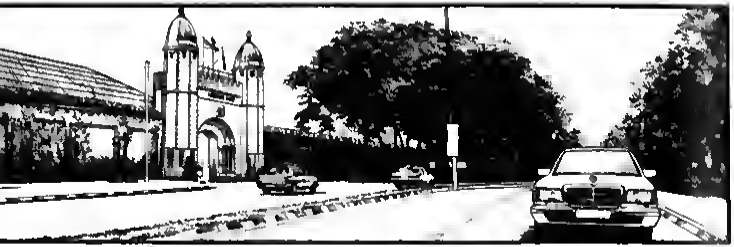
WHAT HAPPENED ?
...

YOU NEVER...
ANSWER MY QUESTIONS.
WHY IS THAT?
SHINGO..
CHIK
YOU'RE JAPANESE, AND YOUR NAME IS SHINGO KUSAKA. AM I RIGHT?
HOW DID YOU..

HOW DYOU THINK I MANAGE TO RUN MY OWN PLACE IN A COUNTRY WHERE I DON'T EVEN SPEAK THE LANGUAGE?
MY BODY ISN'T MY ONLY ASSET!!
TELL ME SOMETHING BEFORE YOU SHOOT
FAP


WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN YOU AND KUSAKA?
WHAT'S IT TO YOU?
MIGHT BE PROFIT-ABLE.
PROFIT-ABLE!?
WE'RE TALKING ABOUT THE ALL-MIGHTY KUSAKA CORPORATION! WHO KNOWS, I MIGHT END UP OWNING ALL THE CLUBS IN MALAYSIA!


PENJARA PUDU
1895
JABATAN PENJARA MALAYSIA



IVE CONFIRMED IT SHINGO KUSAKA WAS EXECUTED AT THIS PRISON THREE YEARS AGO
...

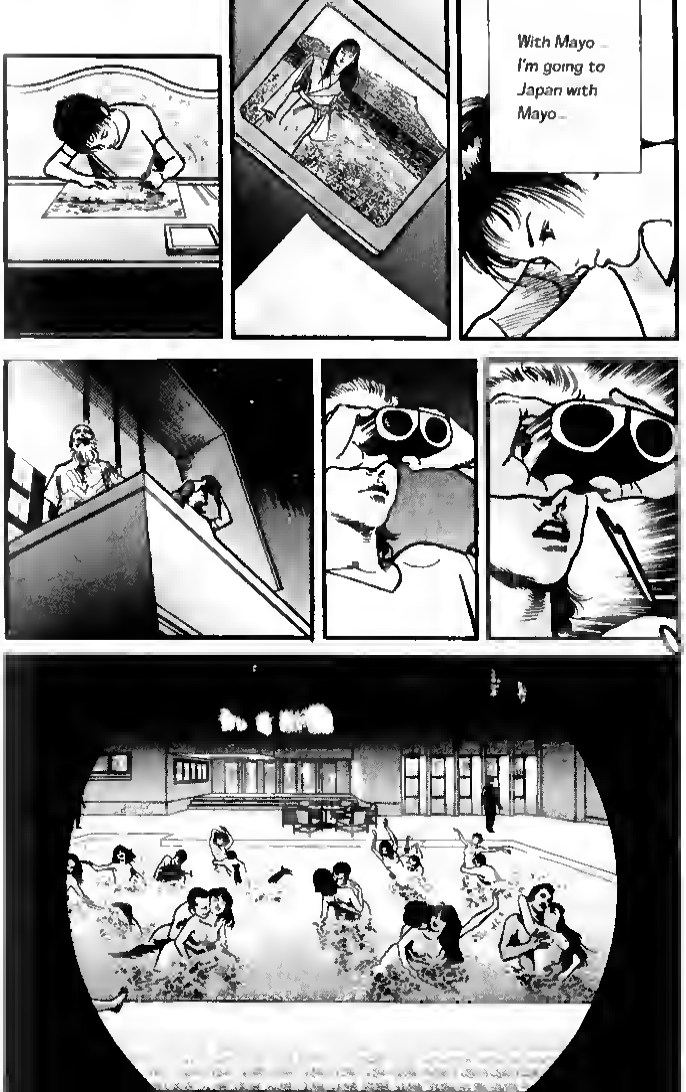
SO WHAT I SAW WAS AN APPARITION?

THERE'S ONLY BEEN ONE REPORT OF ANYONE SURVIVING AN EXECUTION
SURVIVING ?

THE ELECTRIC CHAIR WASN'T CALIBRATED PROPERLY HE WAS ONLY UNCONSCIOUS.
SEVERAL HOURS LATER, HE MANAGED TO CRAWL HIS WAY OUT OF THE GRAVE

There's no reason something that happened once... couldn't happen twice
LET'S GET GOING TAKE US TO THE RESORT

YOU PEEPING TOM!
GET OFF MY CASE! I'M STANDING WATCH!
HOW'S SHION?
SHE'S FINE SHE'S COPYING MAYO!
SKTCH
SKTCH


With Mayo –
I'm going to
Japan with
Mayo –

W-WHAT THE HELL'S GOIN' ON OVER THERE!? SOME KINDA POOL ORGY!?
OH, THAT'S THE KUSAKA RESORT... THEY THROW PARTIES LIKE THAT AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH.

KUSAKA ?

YEAH THE WOMEN ARE PORN STARS FROM JAPAN. THE MEN ARE HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS IN MALAYSIA AND THE REST OF SOUTHEAST ASIA
OFFICIALS !?

H E H

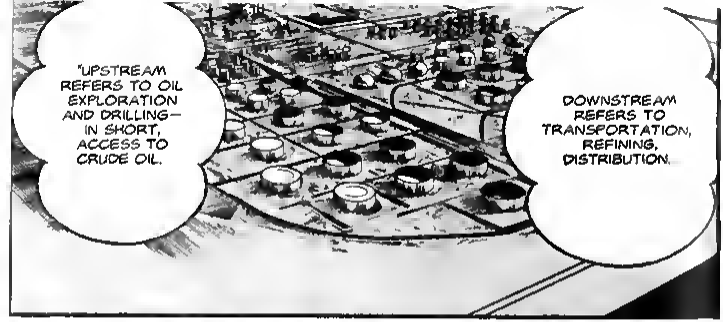
MONEY AND WOMEN ARE THE MOST PERSUASIVE BRIBES
BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENT IN BED TOGETHER... THAT'S NOT SO UNUSUAL.

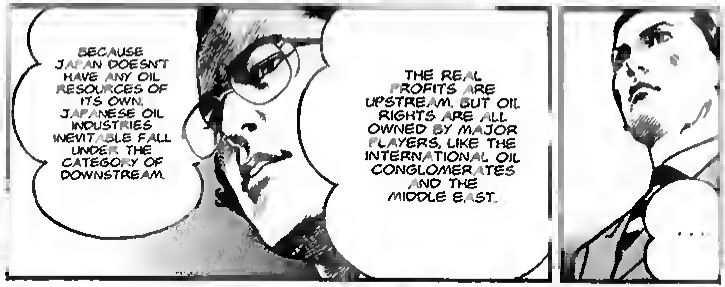
WHY'S KUSAKA SO HOT ON MALAYSIA?

KUSAKA WANTS...

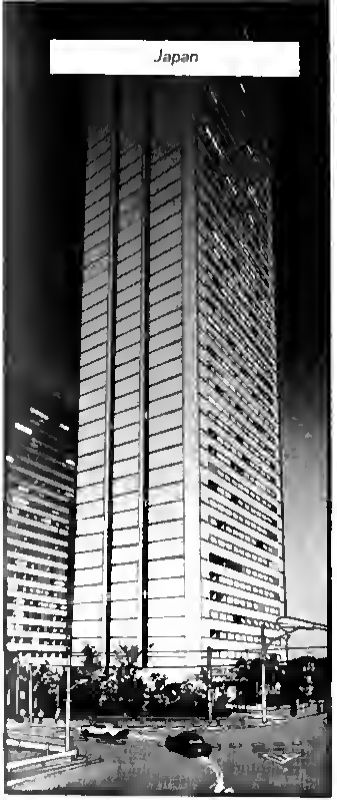
...TO OBTAIN ASIAN OIL RESOURCES.

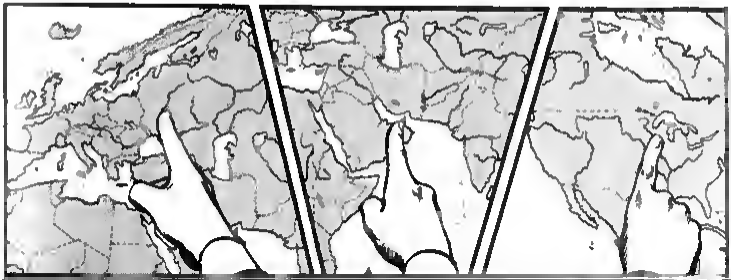
HEY, AOKI.
YOU KNOW THE MEANING OF "UPSTREAM" AND "DOWN STREAM"?
NO SIR.

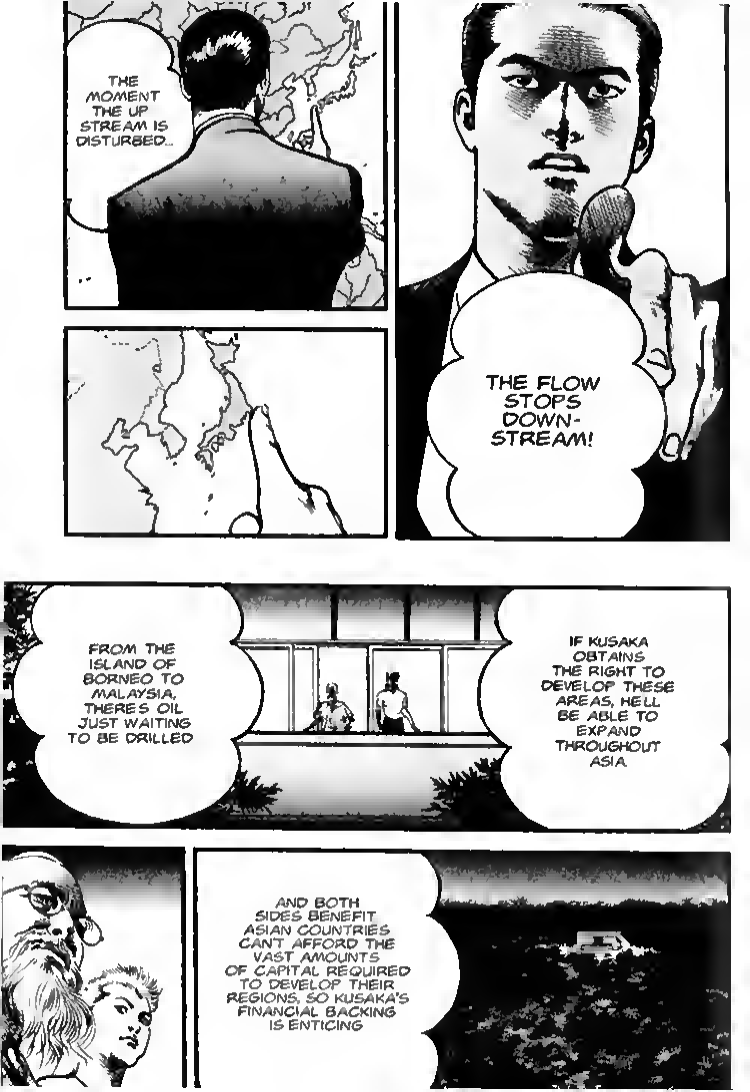

"UPSTREAM REFERS TO OIL EXPLORATION AND DRILLING— IN SHORT, ACCESS TO CRUDE OIL.
DOWNSTREAM REFERS TO TRANSPORTATION, REFINING, DISTRIBUTION.


BECAUSE JAPAN DOESN'T HAVE ANY OIL RESOURCES OF ITS OWN, JAPANESE OIL INDUSTRIES INEVITABLE FALL UNDER THE CATEGORY OF DOWNSTREAM.
THE REAL PROFITS ARE UPSTREAM. BUT OIL RIGHTS ARE ALL OWNED BY MAJOR PLAYERS, LIKE THE INTERNATIONAL OIL CONGLOMERATES AND THE MIDDLE EAST.
...

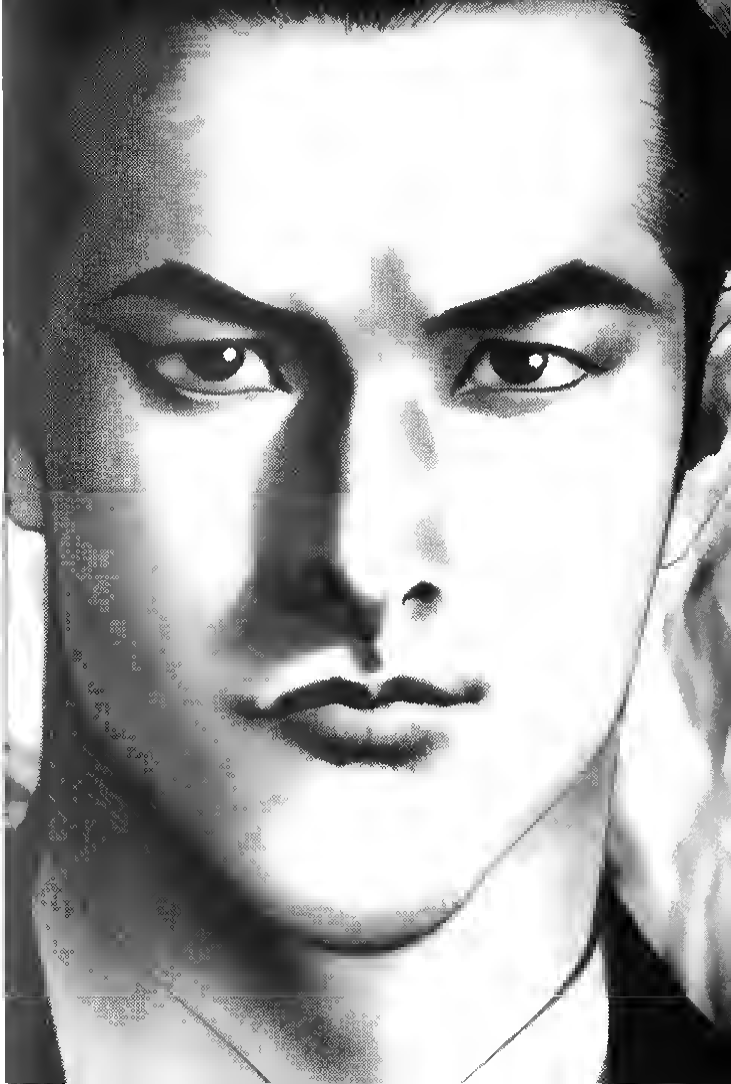
THE WORLD STILL REVOLVES AROUND OIL
IF KUSAKA ENTERS THE UPSTREAM IT'LL BECOME..
..A MAJOR PLAYER! THAT'S SHUNICHIRO KUSAKA'S DREAM!


Japan



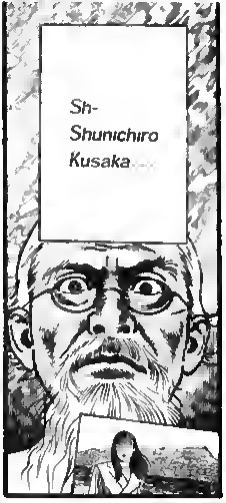

THE MOMENT THE UP STREAM IS DISTURBED...
THE FLOW STOPS DOWN-STREAM!
FROM THE ISLAND OF BORNEO TO MALAYSIA, THERE'S OIL JUST WAITING TO BE DRILLED
IF KUSAKA OBTAINS THE RIGHT TO DEVELOP THESE AREAS, HE'LL BE ABLE TO EXPAND THROUGHOUT ASIA
AND BOTH SIDES BENEFIT ASIAN COUNTRIES CAN'T AFFORD THE VAST AMOUNTS OF CAPITAL REQUIRED TO DEVELOP THEIR REGIONS, SO KUSAKA'S FINANCIAL BACKING IS ENTICING

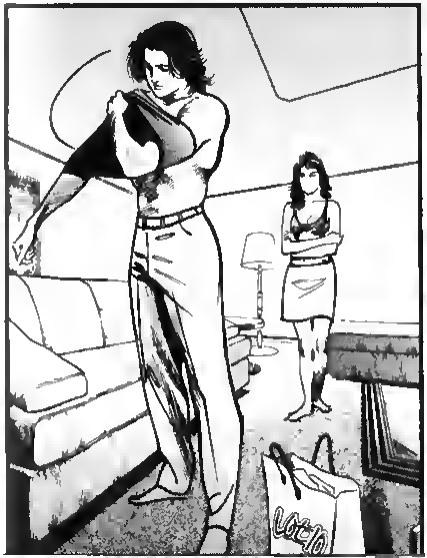
COMPARED TO THE U.S, EUROPE, AND THE MIDDLE EAST, ASIA'S RESOURCES ARE UNDEVELOPED ITS FUTURE IS WIDE OPEN!
WHOEVER OWNS ASIA'S OIL WILL RULE THE WORLD!
AND THESE TWO?
THE DIFFUSION OF HIS STRAIN..
..DIFFUSES HIS POWER..
THE "KING" CANNOT TOLERATE THEIR EXISTENCE



HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS?
I DON'T GET YOU.
SAI! YANG!
WHAT IS IT?
I WANTED TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT MY MOM'S PHOTO, SO I OPENED UP THE FRAME...
AND I FOUND THIS WRITING!
WRITING !?
LOOKS LIKE JAPANESE. I CAN'T READ IT..
CAN YOU, SAI!?

Shunichiro
Kusaka


Sh-
Shunichiro
Kusaka



YOU'RE RELATED TO THE KUSAKA FAMILY, AREN'T YOU?

I'VE GOT A PROPOSITION FOR YOU. WHY DON'T WE WORK TOGETHER?

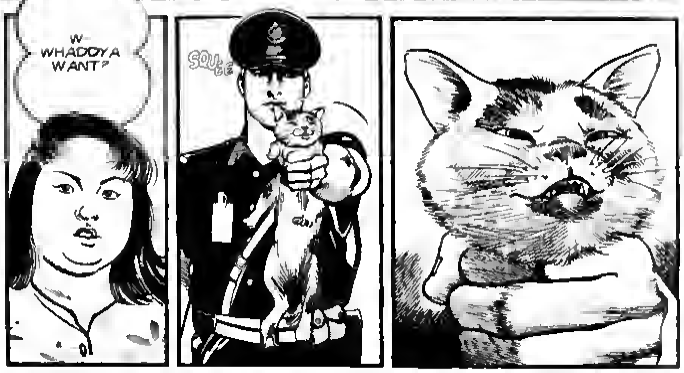
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE FAST ANY-MORE
FAP
I'M MAYO OF MALAYSIA. THAT'S ALL.

WHAK
WHAK
TUMP

SO YOU'RE YANG'S WIFE...

STRAIN
Jinchiseans
#Manga-Sketchbook@Dalnet

CHAPTER EIGHT TREASURE


WHADDYA WANT?
SQUEE

HEY, CUT THE CRAP! THAT'S MY OLD MAN'S FAVORITE CAT YOU'RE MESSIN' WITH!

KRA

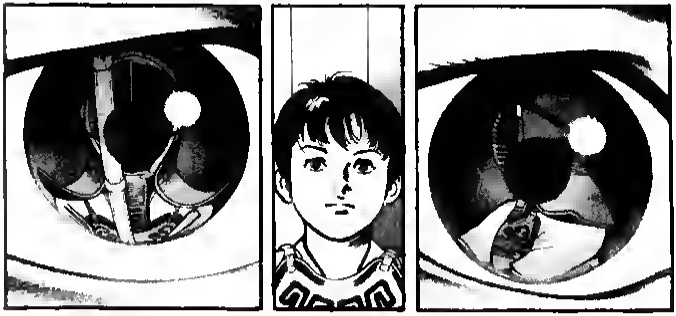
SO WHERE IS YOUR OLD MAN?

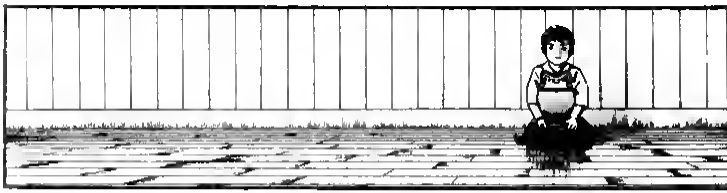
YOU'RE LEAVING?

YEAH.

I DON'T GET IT
DON'T YOU WANT REVENGE?
"REVENGE"?
THAT'S RIGHT
IF SOMEONE BETRAYED ME AND TRIED TO EXECUTE ME
FWIP
I'D WANNA GET BACK AT 'EM!

HUH?
NO MATTER WHO IT IS?
IT'S ONLY NORMAL
SQUEE
NO MATTER WHO...





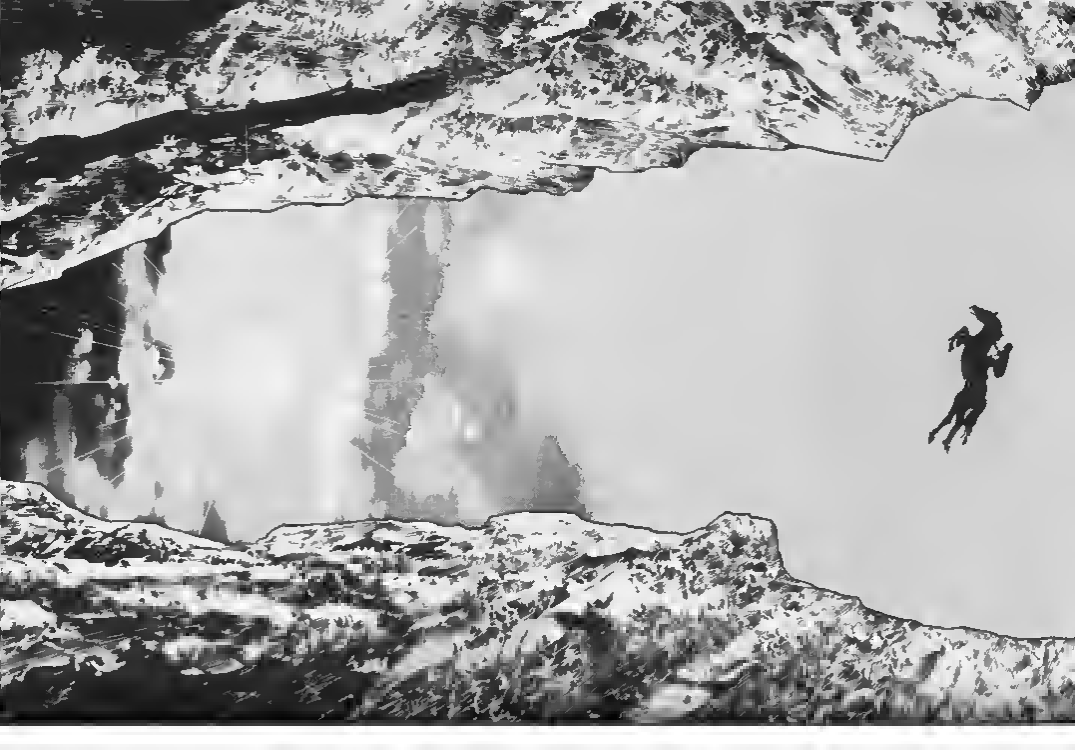
心技体

TMP
TMP
WAK
SIR, YOU ARE NOW THE MASTER, NOT I.
SHF

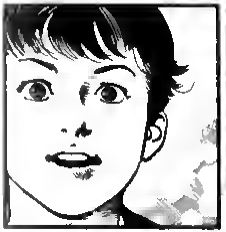
TA-TUMP TATUMP TATUMP
AHH
SQUEE

TA
TUMP

TA TUMP TA TUMP TA TUMP
TA TUMP
PLEASE, SIR, STOP!
IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!

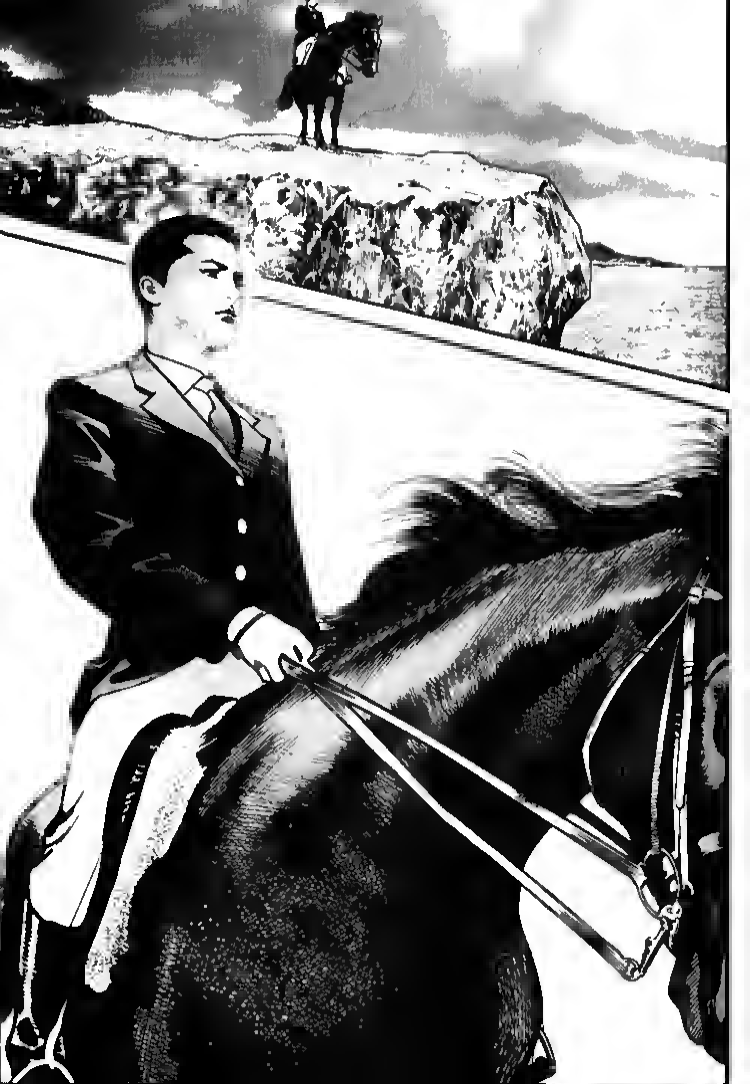


TUMP



SQUEE

SHINGO
WHAT
IS YOUR
TREASURE?

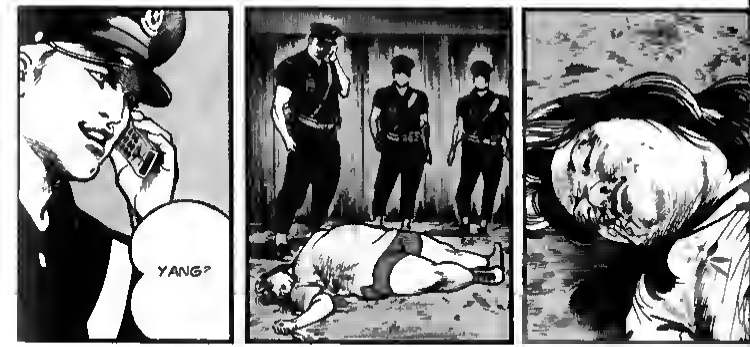


This can't be..

日下俊一郎
Shunichiro Kusaka

SOME ONE'S NAME?
MAYBE.. MY FATHER'S !?

I DON'T KNOW. I CAN'T READ JAPANESE
Better that she doesn't know. At least not yet.
So one mystery has been solved.
The tree that links Shion to her mother is KUSAKA...
BREEP
BREEP
THAT'S MY CELL PHONE
WHO'S THIS!?


YANG?

LISTEN UP—
KRAK
AHH!
T.U.P
Y-YANG

L-LIAN-SU!!
WE'LL BE WAITING, YANG.
SHE WON'T LAST MUCH LONGER IF YOU DON'T GET HER TO A HOSPITAL SOON.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
TH-THAT WAS ANGEL...
WHAT!?
YANG!
TMP TMP

I G-GOTTA GO!
LIAN-SU'S MY WIFE!
TMP
YANG...
THIS IS ALL MY FAULT, ISN'T IT?
BECAUSE YOU RESCUED ME.
SHION...
SQUEE
NO, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT

YOU'RE NOT TO BLAME
LIAN-SU...
YOUR WIFE'S A REAL ODDBALL, ISN'T SHE, YANG?
Y-YANG

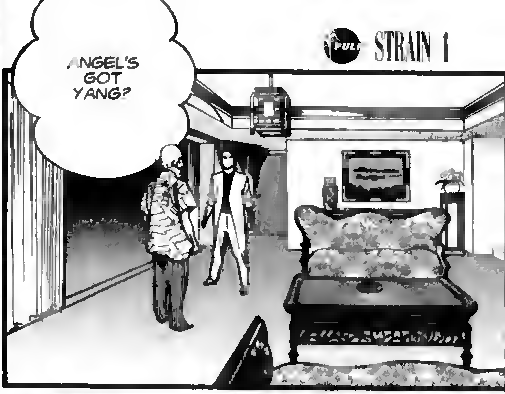
WE BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF HER, BUT SHE WOULDN'T CALL YOU.
THEN WE KILL THIS STUPID PUSSY HERE AND SHE SPILLS THE BEANS.
WHAP
...
LIAN-SU!
FUMP
Y-YANG...
I'M SORRY... SORRY ABOUT THE CAT.

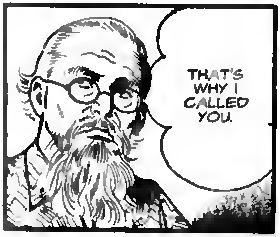
SQUEE

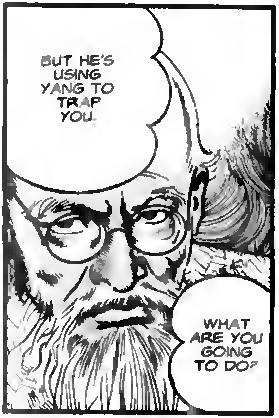
Y-YOU IDIOT... FORGET ABOUT THE CAT! I'M HERE FOR YOU NOW.

NOW THAT WE'VE GOT OUR BAIT...

LET'S GO FISHING FOR MAYO!

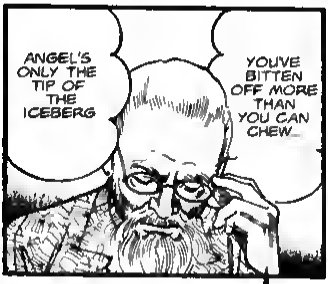

ANGEL'S GOT YANG?


THAT'S WHY I CALLED YOU.

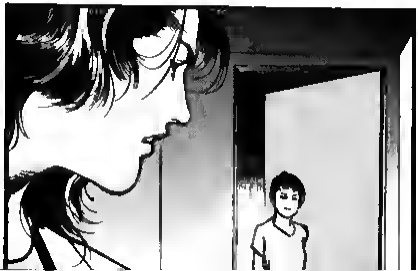

BUT HE'S USING YANG TO TRAP YOU.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

FAP
SO YOU'RE GOING
MAYO. WHAT DO YOU WANT FOR SHION?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IF YOU WANT HER TO LIVE, GO AWAY WITH HER.
GO SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY FROM JAPAN AND MALAYSIA.

GO AWAY?


ANGEL'S ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG
YOUVE BITTEN OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW

SHION'S FATHER IS THE HEAD OF KUSAKA, SHUNICHIRO KUSAKA!



To Be Continued